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I Outlines of the religion and
philosophy of Swedenborg



OUTLINES
OF THE
RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY
OF
SWEDENBORG.

BY
THEOPHILUS PARSONS.



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OUTLINES OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NEW CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

A CHURCH may be defined as the collective body of those who agree together in faith and in worship.

There have been, and there are, many churches; differing from each other in their systems of faith and modes of worship.

All churches, so far as their religious tenets or doctrines have any truth, are founded upon revelation. The reason of this is, that religious doctrines relate necessarily to God and a life after death; and the human mind is incapable of forming the first or simplest idea, or having any thought whatever concerning these topics by the exercise of the senses, or of sensuous thought concerning what the senses discover. By this phrase I mean thinking, by the exercise of any or all the intellectual faculties, only on what the senses teach; drawing inferential instruction from the direct instruction

which the senses give; and thus continually enlarging the knowledge which a right use of the senses enables us to acquire, but with no reference to any thing higher. It is certain that, without the senses, we could not know any thing or think any thing about the material world, or the life we pass upon this world. It is equally certain, although not so obvious, that without revelation, or information received from the other world, we could not know any thing or think any thing about that world, or an infinite Creator of that world and this.

If men did not think about what the senses acquaint them with, they would be but little better for their senses. They would not gain so much from them as the lower animals do, for these have a kind and measure of sensuous thought. Men have a far greater power of sensuous thought, that they may profit far more by their senses. This power is, indeed, far larger and higher than the analogous power which the lower animals have; for, with them, this power exists at once in the highest development it can reach, as soon as the animals are old enough to make use of it; and with but little difference among animals of the same species, or among successive generations. It stops where it begins. No animal grows much more knowing by experience, nor can the individual or the race transmit what they have learned to their successors so as to permit

an accumulation or a growth of knowledge. Recently, the doctrine of "Evolution" has come into great prominence. It may be that sufficient reasons will be found for holding this process of evolution, under some form or modification, as one of the laws or methods of Divine Providence in creation. But if an animal of a new kind, a new species, may thus have come into existence from or through the agency of a lower, — a better from a worse, a higher from a lower, — it will still be true and certain that no animal below man, however he may have been formed, has the power of consciously and intentionally helping the future to know more than the past.

In all these particulars, the power of sensuous thought in men differs from that in the lower animals. In men, this power is nearly nothing in the beginning of life, but grows afterwards, or may grow, to the end of life. All that a man learns, he may teach. All that a generation acquires, it may transmit to a succeeding generation. This is done imperfectly, because of the imperfect exercise of this power of sensuous thought. Nevertheless, there is constantly much teaching of the knowledge acquired by the exercise of this power, and a large accumulation of this knowledge and a great advancement in it, from generation to generation.

There is no limit to the possible progress of this

power, if rightly exercised, either in the amount of knowledge it may acquire, or in the utilization of this knowledge for the benefit of individual and social life. It seeks to learn all it can of the forces and laws of external nature, to use these forces to make life on earth easier and more delightful, and to overcome the hinderance and obstruction with which these forces resist the designs and efforts of mankind. All this it might do, if rightfully exercised, with a continual progress, which would have neither interruption nor termination.

But it can do only this. However properly, sagaciously, or energetically exercised, it can do no more than this. It belongs to this world, to this life; and whatever it may add to the knowledge of this world or the improvement of this life, it cannot take a single step beyond or above this life. Whatever may be the enlargement, or, if we prefer to call it so, the elevation of sensuous thought in its use or its effect, it does not in this way change or make any approach to a change of its essential nature. It may embrace all the kingdoms of Nature, and penetrate the material heavens. But it continues to be sensuous thought, and only that, as entirely as it was in its beginning, or in its earliest and lowest activities. A man may master all the truths of natural science, or utilize them all to the advantage of external human life, and still employ sensuous thought

as exclusively as the savage who hammers one stone with another, and so makes his hatchet.

The human mind possesses higher powers; or, if we think proper to express it differently, we may say that it is able to use all its powers in another and a higher way. The difference between these two classes of powers, or between these two ways of using all intellectual faculty, is like the difference between the two lives we lead.

We begin life in this world, as men living upon earth. We have senses exquisitely adapted to earth, and to all the information which earth can give; and intellectual faculties which, using the senses as means, may make this life one of continually greater enjoyment. But, after we have ceased to live on earth, we shall live another life in another world, and this other life will never cease. As we have faculties perfectly adapted, if rightly used, to make this life one of enjoyment, and our senses are given us as the means of attaining this end, so we have faculties as perfectly adapted to make the other life one of happiness; and revelation from or through that world provides for us the means of attaining this end by the rightful use of these faculties.

THE NECESSITY OF REVELATION.

Revelation is not an abnormal thing, coming in to supply a sudden or exceptional necessity; it is

a perfectly regular part of the method of Divine Providence. It is as essential and indispensable to any knowledge or thought about spiritual life or the other world, as the senses are indispensable to any knowledge or thought about this life or this world; and it is as perfectly possible for revelation from the other world to teach us about that life and that world, as it is for the senses to teach us about this world. Then it is the business of spiritual thought — we use this phrase in contrast with sensuous thought — to make a rightful use of the instruction which revelation gives.

Revelation discloses to us the fact of another life. It is, as the derivation of the word implies, an unveiling: by it, the veil which hides that world from us is partially lifted. It tells us that there is One who made that world and this; and it tells us also somewhat about Him and His nature and method of action, His laws and His purposes. And an application of our intellectual faculties, in an appropriate way, to the truths which revelation teaches may give us an ever-growing enlargement of knowledge regarding them, and may lead us to an ever-growing happiness.

Whether we call the faculty of spiritual thought a distinct and higher faculty, or say that it is only a higher use and employment of the same faculties which give the power of sensuous thought, it is still

true that spiritual thought when rightly employed about God, the soul, and other matters of religion, works, to a large extent, in like manner with sensuous thought, when that is rightly employed about its proper topics. If religion rests in some degree upon intuition or perception that certain propositions are true, so does science just as much; for the very foundation-truths of all science — axioms, or postulates — are, on the one hand, perfectly indispensable to science, and, on the other, assumed to be true in the absence of all proof; because by the constitution of human nature we cannot help believing that they are true. Religion, building upon its own foundation, which is revelation, uses logic, inference, analogy, and deduction in arguing from a general truth to its particulars, and induction in arguing from particular truths to the general truth which includes them; and religion reasons, in all these and similar ways, as freely as science.

If there are similarities, there are also essential and vital differences between spiritual and sensuous thought. One of these — that the basis of sensuous thought is sense, and the basis of spiritual thought revelation — has already been spoken of. There is another of almost equal importance.

Through all the work of sensuous thought, the intellect alone is called upon to act, and is alone permitted to act. They who would think safely

are careful to exclude from their thought all influence of feeling and affection; and that this must be guarded against is one of the rules for sound and just scientific inquiry. But for the higher mode of thought the rule is otherwise. Here feeling, affection, and moral tendency come in; not to warp or obscure intellectual action or perception, but to animate and encourage and illustrate them. The results reached do not depend upon the intellect only, but upon this and upon the affections and the character also. Hence the fact to which the whole history of religion bears testimony, — that a system of religious truth is seldom received or rejected only because of the weight of argument or of evidence for or against it, but as it suits or opposes the character and tendencies, the affectional and moral wants, of those to whom it is offered. The intellect may be misled in these inquiries, and its conclusions falsified by the affections and the character. A mistaken enthusiasm may teach untruths, and cling to them. On the other hand, a coldness towards truths of this higher order, or fixed habits of thought adverse to them, or a rejoicing confidence in the strength of one's own powers and the truths they have won, with a sense of humiliation at the necessity of assistance from greater strength, — all these and similar moral difficulties have in all ages led, and will always lead, minds of great strength and culture to

reject all aid from revelation, and deny all its truths. Hence always and now, some of those who are universally acknowledged as leaders of scientific thought have been, and are, unbelievers of all that merely sensuous thought is unable to grasp.

The cause of this important difference between sensuous thought which appeals only to the intellect, and super-sensuous thought which appeals also to the moral and affectional nature, may be considered more fully hereafter. Now, we say only that life in this world is but a life of preparation for another. This must be a preparation of the character, for it is that which determines the quality of life, everywhere, in this world or in the other. It is obvious that the moral character would be harmed by a compulsory intellectual reception of spiritual truth, followed by that disregard and rejection of it in life, which must spring from an antagonism to it on the part of the affections and moral tendencies. Better, it must be, that one should reject this truth intellectually, than that he should receive it intellectually by the compulsion of proof, and then harden himself against it; and so destroy or lessen the possibility that he may at some future time open his mind to the truth, and his heart to its influence.

The whole course of increase of knowledge by means of sensuous thought has been, first, to some conclusion; then to the discovery that this conclu-

sion was erroneous, in whole or in part, and the substitution of another, — and this other, regarded as certain when it was adopted, was in its turn swept away, or greatly modified by the next wave of knowledge, and its successor took its place. Perhaps no one of what were the theories or the certainties of science two thousand, or even one thousand, years ago are held now. The cycles and epicycles of ancient astronomy have been supplanted by the circles and ellipses and other conic curves of modern astronomy. In chemistry the change is even more marked. It would seem to be impossible that the truths and principles now relied upon should ever be abandoned; but it is in the highest degree probable that the theories explanatory of them, or connected with them, will be most importantly modified. Perhaps we may believe that natural science has ascertained certain physical facts, in many branches of knowledge, which can never be disproved, because they are facts. But the inferences to be drawn from them, the laws which regulate them, and the theories which explain them, will all be subjected to changes as great as those which have attended the progress of science hitherto.

Something at least analogous to this is true in respect to the results of higher or spiritual thought, — using this phrase in distinction from sensuous thought, and meaning by it thought concerning

those things about which the senses can know nothing and can teach nothing.

SUCCESSIVE REVELATIONS.

Religious truth has passed through successive phases. In the words of the apostle, "God at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the Fathers." The existence of a God, and of another life, are two great truths which all revelation from the beginning has declared, and all religion has accepted. But, with different races and in different ages, these truths have borne very different aspects, and have led to very different conclusions of faith and practice.

There are two reasons for this: one of which is, that the law of unending life must be the law of unending growth; for growth is of the essence of life. The moment when improvement comes to an end, must be a moment when that which is most valuable in life has come to an end. Goethe said that the thought of unending life sometimes oppressed him, because there must be in it a period when farther progress was impossible, and there would be nothing left but unending stagnation; but he was comforted on this point when he looked up to the stars. He might have found the same consolation in looking through the microscope; for in these days, if the telescope has disclosed the indefi-

nite in the great and distant, the microscope has disclosed it in the little and the near. But if Goethe had known where and how to look for it, he might have found, not consolation only, but hope and joy in the prospect of a constantly growing enlargement of power, and of happiness in the exercise of power for usefulness.

There is another reason for this perpetual progress, which applies only to spiritual thought and its results. For this thought, revelation supplies the foundation and the means. And revelation has always been progressive, and always limited in its disclosures. If revelation comes from God and His heaven, and comes to tell us of Him and heaven, and how to go to heaven, why has it not been always full and clear in its instruction; telling us at once, and if need be keeping us constantly and accurately informed, of all that is knowable about Him and the other life? Surely, such knowledge is of as much more value to us as immortals than any knowledge about earth, as eternity is more than time. Surely, He could if He would give to all the nature He creates and governs, — to the leaves, the stars, the winds, — a voice to speak of Him. Why has he not done this? The answer to this question I can give much better hereafter, when I treat of human freedom, its necessities, its laws, and its effect. Now I only note the fact, that there has

never been a revelation so complete as to leave nothing more to be known; so distinct that it could not be misunderstood; and so well attested that it could not be denied and rejected. And there never will be such a revelation.

It has been already said, that, to all reception and comprehension of spiritual truth, there were moral and affectional requisites as well as intellectual. Only to improve and elevate the whole nature of man, and chiefly his moral and affectional nature, is revelation given; and this improvement and elevation cannot be effectually made unless man does his part, in the freedom which is given him that he may do this. It is an easy conclusion that revelation must always, in its instruments and its method, its quantity and its character, be perfectly adapted by perfect wisdom to the needs and possibilities of those to whom it is given. Hence the fact, already referred to, but only to be understood where the nature and the purpose of all revelation are understood, — that there never has been, is not, and never will be, a revelation such in its disclosures and in its evidence, that it cannot be utterly rejected by those whom, for whatever reason, rejection suits better than acceptance.

Revelations have been usually attested by miracles. That given to the children of Israel was attended by miracles of the most striking and almost

appalling character. That upon which the Christian religion was founded, rested on testimony of a different kind. In the first place, our Lord's life and character bore witness to the truth of His words. Besides this, however, they were abundantly proved by miracles; or, as the word so translated should be translated, signs.* And these were all of them works of cure, of healing, or of gift; always works of obvious mercy, and never works of terror.

THE LATEST REVELATION.

Now another revelation is given. As the Christian revelation explained and carried forward the work of the Israelitish revelation, so this new revelation explains and completes the work of the Christian revelation. As the Christian revelation advanced so far beyond the Israelitish revelation as to rest upon its own miracles of merey instead of the terrors and trumpet-tones of Sinai, so this new revelation advances one step farther, and appeals only to reason and faith. For this is the second Christian revelation.

* The word "miracle," in the received English version, occurs almost exclusively in the Gospel of John. But the word so translated there occurs frequently in the other Gospels, and is there always translated "sign," as it is in some places in John. Why the word miracle was thus used in the translation of the last Gospel, and in that alone, I have never been able to learn.

This revelation was made through a man, whose life and character were most peculiar. He was the son of a Bishop, who was eminent in station and excellent in character. He was educated thoroughly in all the learning of his time; was for many years practically and busily at work as a mining engineer, holding high office in the Board which had charge of the mines of Sweden, and during this period publishing many works about the business he was engaged in, and other more general scientific subjects; and by these works winning a high reputation, and an acknowledged position among scientific men. All this continued until he had reached the age of fifty years. Then a change began, which completed itself in a few years. During his whole subsequent life, he utterly renounced the study of natural science and all worldly occupation, and devoted himself with all his former energy to spiritual science.

This he declared to be his mission, and in doing this he called himself the servant of the Lord.

Is this credible? What is the evidence of the truth of so strange a statement?

If a new revelation was to be made through him, if it was to be made by his statement of spiritual truths, they should be not merely new, but so entirely distinct from all that was ever before known, so well adapted to send the mind forward on a new

path and from a new beginning, so able to supply new motives and incentives to a new moral and affectional as well as intellectual progress, and new instruction to guide this progress, as to justify and authorize this large claim.

This is precisely what his disclosures seem to give, to those who have studied them most carefully and most thoroughly. Nor do we know, or have we ever heard, of any person who studied them with care and thoroughness, and came to a different conclusion. Those who have made themselves — so far as such study could do this — competent to judge of them, believe that they answer questions as old as human thought, which have always been shrouded in darkness; that they give a rational and intelligible explanation of the nature of God and of His providence in reference to His whole creation and to every part of it, and bring into new light the laws of existence and life, and the duties, destinies, and hopes of mankind; and that they do one absolutely new thing, in destroying the separation, if not antagonism, between faith and reason, religion and science, — basing the whole world of spiritual truth upon the world of natural truth, and opening to the grasp and to the work of reason all truth equally.

There is, however, one difficulty. He declares that his spiritual senses were open through many

years, and a part of his writings is occupied with describing what he saw and heard in the spiritual world. Such a statement and such descriptions must affect different classes of minds very differently. To the imaginative, who are lovers of the marvellous and not accustomed to weigh evidence, or, indeed, to ask for it, such statements come pleasantly, and are in themselves a reason for accepting all the revelations made through him.

Not so is it with thoughtful and inquiring minds, who begin with the assumption of an extreme antecedent improbability, and require evidence of sufficient weight to overthrow it; and while they admit that these claims and revelations should be judged of by evidence suited to them in kind and character, they demand that it should be conclusive. And some find this. They find it, first in the coherence, completeness, and clearness of these statements and revelations, which commend themselves to belief by their aspect of rationality and truthfulness. They find it next, by the novelty of the principles involved, and of the system of thought and faith builded upon them. Such inquirers see an all-embracing system of truth laid before them, logical in its order and consistency, solving problems which have engaged in all ages the strongest minds and never before found a solution. They say this system would have been discovered before, if

merely human thought could have found it; and a large part of it, that relating to the life after death, while perfectly satisfying the demands of reason, could not, by its own nature, have been placed within the grasp of reason, excepting by revelation.

Very often have I heard a remark substantially like this: "There are many beautiful and valuable things in the writings of Swedenborg, but how can I, as a rational man, believe his assertion that he lived consciously in the spiritual world, and that God was giving to mankind a new revelation by him, without proof and adequate proof?—and there is no proof whatever." True, there is nothing which this person could regard as proof. During the many years of Swedenborg's uninterrupted intercourse with the spiritual world, there would be, perhaps there must be, instances of knowledge possessed by him, which were not to be explained except by the truth of his statement concerning himself. There were quite a number of such instances. But he utterly disclaimed and rejected any use of them as proofs of his veracity. Not only so, but it is a point in his doctrines, repeatedly stated, that all such proof of this new revelation would be not only useless but mischievous.

It is of the very essence of this revelation that it is given to man's reason; and to his reason acting in freedom. Any thing whatever which compelled or

constrained his reason would be out of place in this revelation, and would tend to fetter or impair that freedom to which this revelation is given. Its doctrines must rest in every mind upon proof; but the only proof they require or permit is the proof of a rational perception of their truth,—a proof perfectly convincing, and perfectly incommunicable. There is an ancient proverb, — said to be Arabian, — “The eyes of the heart sometimes see farther than the eyes of the head.” And the apostle said, “With the heart, man believeth unto righteousness.”

It may be added, that the difficulty in believing the relations of Swedenborg, concerning things seen and heard in the spiritual world, does not lie in *what* he says of that world, but in the fact that he says any thing whatever, distinctly and definitely, concerning it. The belief in another life, or that men and women after death continue to live as men and women in forms and in a world suited to them, has become very feeble among thinking persons throughout Christendom. Many profess this belief, sometimes urgently; and they do so to confirm their belief and persuade themselves that they do believe. But this belief is at best a hope, more or less confident, but perfectly undefined, and not a subject of distinct conception. To such, any description whatever of that world and its inhabitants, presenting them as living persons, actively employed, must

come with a shock. This fading out of belief in actual life after death constituted one of the necessities for this new revelation; and it constitutes one of the principal difficulties in its reception.

If it be a revelation, it must necessarily make its way into acceptance and belief very slowly. This point I shall consider presently. Now I will only say, that it came because it was necessary. It was necessary, because the intellectual and affectional character of the age was so far from the truth, and so far antagonistic to spiritual truth, that progress or improvement was impossible, and the loss or corruption of what was known, probable, if a new revelation were not given. And that condition of the human mind and character which made it necessary, resists it when it comes.

There are intellectual men of high powers and great cultivation, who sometimes reason about the soul and its origin and destiny. But they bring to the investigation of spiritual truth faculties and habits of thought trained and fixed into fitness for a very different kind of work, and unfitness for this. The acceptance of the mere elements and rudiments of all spiritual truth is almost impossible to them, for revelation itself, or the fact that there has been or can be any revelation, is not, perhaps cannot be, admitted by them. They would look with contempt upon those who try to work out from revelations of

spiritual truth the sciences of geology or chemistry or physics; and they make the very same mistake in trying to work out spiritual truth from the senses or modes of thought proper to the consideration of what the senses teach. They do not know that, but for the indirect and diffused influence of revelation on the minds of all who live where there is any religion, they could not even think about, and therefore not even deny, God, and a soul, and another life. The inquiry into protoplasm and the reflex action of the nervous centres may be able, successful, and yield valuable results; but the chain of observation and ratiocination which led to these results will not go on, and reach up to God and the Infinite. For that purpose, reason must take a new departure; it must begin differently, and proceed differently. If any such person should read what I have written, what can he think but that I ask him to renounce logic and reason, and trust to sentiment; to abandon the realms of knowledge for those where feeling only is acknowledged as authority, and enthusiasm is the lawful sovereign? And yet I do not mean this, and I desire it just as little as he would.

Perhaps the state of mind induced in the present day, by a successful devotion to the study of natural science, may be illustrated by the fact that some among the most eminent of living scientists find it easier to believe that the wonderful order of the

universe, with all the marvellous results of its laws and forces in the world—not of matter only, but of mind—are caused by the reflex action of nervous centres, or some inherent power of matter to form protoplasm, and then of protoplasm to vivify itself, or by the mutual action of atoms, than by the simple truth, almost universally believed by all races in all ages, that they are caused by a Divine Creator.

Professor Tyndall, in his address recently delivered at Belfast, says:—

“Over and above his understanding, there are many other things appertaining to man, whose prescriptive rights are quite as strong as that of the understanding itself. . . . There are such things interwoven into the nature of man as the feeling of awe, reverence, wonder, . . . the love of the beautiful, physical and moral, in Nature, poetry, and art. There is also that deep-set feeling which, since the earliest dawn of history, and probably for ages prior to the dawn of history, incorporated itself into the religions of the world. You who have escaped from these regions into the high-and-dry light of the understanding, may deride them; but, in so doing, you deride accidents of form merely, and fail to touch the immovable basis of religious sentiment in the emotional nature of man. To yield this sentiment reasonable satisfaction, is the problem of problems at the present hour.”

Through the address, both before and after the passages above quoted, he throws out some hints as to the method by which he would solve this "problem of problems." The noticeable thing is, that he everywhere assumes that the understanding can have nothing to do with this work. The passage begins, "Over and above his understanding, are many other things," &c., "whose rights are as strong as that of the understanding itself." He opposes "the high-and-dry light of the understanding" to the "religious sentiment in the emotional nature of man." And the problem of the day is, to yield reasonable satisfaction to "this sentiment." All that the understanding has to do is to take care that this satisfaction is no more than reasonable. He concludes the paragraph from which we have quoted, thus: "It will be wise to recognize them [the religions of the world] as the forms of a force, mischievous, if permitted to intrude on the regions of *knowledge* over which it holds no command, but capable of being guided by liberal thought to noble issues in the region of *emotion*, which is its proper sphere. It is in vain to oppose this force with a view to its extirpation. What we should oppose, to the death if necessary, is every attempt to found, upon this elemental bias of man's nature, a system which should exercise despotic sway over his intellect."

What can be plainer or more certain than that Mr. Tyndall confines religion entirely to feeling or emotion, denying to it any hold upon the understanding, and permitting it to exist only on condition that it abstain from any reference to the understanding. It is not less than marvellous that he should suppose this religious sentiment could consider any "satisfaction" as "reasonable" or sufficient, which wholly excluded it from all connection with the understanding, and which permitted no man to hold his religious belief as a distinct and positive intellectual belief.

And yet he is perfectly right on his own ground. If the understanding were only that which he has known and cultivated as such; if its faculties were only those which he has used, and could be used only in the way in which he has used them, and had no materials to work with but those which the senses supply, and which he has worked upon and with so successfully, — then he is entirely right. Between the understanding and religion, the separation must be absolute. But, then, what can he mean when he says that the problem of the day is to satisfy the religious sentiment *reasonably*?

Elsewhere in this address, he says: "The whole process of evolution is the manifestation of a Power absolutely inscrutable to the intellect of man. As little in our day as in the days of Job, can man, by

searching, find this Power out. Considered fundamentally, it is by the operation of an insoluble mystery that life is evolved," &c. An insoluble mystery! And yet the problem of this day is to solve this mystery; for what else can give "reasonable satisfaction" to the belief that it exists, and should be the object of reverence, faith and worship, obedience and love?—and surely, all these, in some way or measure, are included in all the forms of religious sentiment and emotion.

How happens it never to have occurred to Mr. Tyndall, and thinkers like him, that this Power, which, as a part of its work, has implanted in human nature this religious sentiment, may have given to it some means of intellectual satisfaction? "Certainly," they may answer, "it might have done so, but it has not. We have looked through the realms of Nature, even to their depths, and we are sure that they supply no such means." I would reply, It may be that Nature has not supplied, and could not supply, such means; or, in other words, this Power could not or would not, certainly has not, by or through Nature, provided such means. But can there be no other way? If they answer, We can see no other way, I say, Does this prove that there is no other way? May not your want of insight be your own fault? Is it not at least possible that this Power, because it would not through Nature alone

give the needed information, has found another way of giving it? And if you reject at once, and without inquiry, whatever purports to be information given in this other way, may you not be rejecting truth that would offer a perfect reconciliation between religion and the understanding; giving to religion the full support of all that knowledge which you value so highly, and casting upon the dark places, even of that knowledge, a new and guiding light?

We believe that he is perfectly right in saying that, to yield this religious sentiment reasonable satisfaction, is the "problem of problems" at the present hour. And we believe, also, that the system of thought and belief introduced by Swedenborg will lead to the solution of this "problem of problems."

It is not unbelief alone which resists and prevents the acceptance of this last revelation. Still greater and wider is the effect of a firm and undoubting belief in the doctrines made familiar by education, and sanctioned in many minds by the conviction that it would be dangerous and sinful to change or renounce them. In some minds, of great power and careful culture, the doctrines of the sect they belong to are confirmed by long-continued study, by earnest efforts to maintain them and expose the errors of doctrines which op-

pose theirs, and by the fixed and indurated habit of loving their doctrines as their own, as a part of themselves, and thus protecting them by the invincible strength of self-love and pride of opinion.

Another cause of the slow and narrow reception of this new system of truth lies in the fact that it shares that characteristic of imperfection, which, it has been already said, is common to all revelations. This new revelation is indeed imperfect in many respects. It is given to man's reason, and to reason in its freedom; and, that this freedom may be more perfect, it is not given by inspiration. No intelligent receiver of the truths taught by Swedenborg regards him as inspired, or considers his writings as superseding or equal to the Bible. His very unusual faculties were cultivated by the most varied and thorough education possible to him, that he might be thus prepared to receive intelligently truths taught him in a most unusual way, and to profit to the utmost by this instruction. This was all. His words were not God's words, but his own; full, as we believe, of truth and wisdom, but limited in their scope, and liable to error. A most important doctrine taught by him is that of the spiritual sense of Scripture, as resting upon the correspondence of natural things with spiritual things. But he confines his interpretation to three books of the Bible, and the texts from other parts incidentally referred

to. Thus he gives the principles and elements of this correspondence with much illustration, but leaves the application of them to the works and Word of God, to those who receive them. His other works are doctrinal or philosophical. But, while they contain a wisdom which opens to a receptive mind a vista that looks far into the depths of being, and truths that flash on eyes not closed to them like new sunlight, they have none of the charms of rhetoric; and are sometimes repellent to the new student, by the repetitions with which he seeks to enforce the truths he most valued, and by other characteristics, which, altogether, make his books any thing but easy reading.

If this new revelation is thus imperfect in what we may call its foundation, it is far, very far, more imperfect in its reception by those who sit at the feet of Swedenborg as learners, and would gladly impart what they know to others. We have neither his ability, nor his learning, nor his long and complete devotion to this use; and, most assuredly, we have nothing of the peculiar sources of information which were opened to him. Moreover, the causes above alluded to, as impeding the reception of this revelation in the world, act within our own minds to make this reception poor and limited. They who know these doctrines best, know best how little they know, and how imperfectly they understand what

they know. They cannot study the religion which he teaches, without seeing at every step that it underlies a profound philosophy. They cannot study his philosophy without learning a lesson that continually repeats itself;—the lesson that all true philosophy rests upon religion, not only in general, but in every particular; and that a true religion finds a support and confirmation in all true philosophy. These two are in his works, distinct, and yet united; and it must depend upon the bent of his mind who studies them, whether he would call the system of truth, which these works contain, a religious philosophy or a philosophical religion.

In Swedenborg's mind and purpose, religion far outweighed philosophy, so far as they were distinct from each other. Hence it is that he teaches philosophy only as that is connected with religion. But that connection is so close and constant, that, in teaching and illustrating religious doctrines, he teaches much of philosophy. Nevertheless, one who studied all of his works to learn his philosophy would find that they gave only the *Outlines of the Philosophy of the New-Church*. In giving this name to my little book, I have not the slightest thought of reproducing all of Swedenborg's philosophy. I am so far from being able to do this, that an attempt to do it would be very foolish. Minds, different from those which have as yet accepted his

doctrines, must engage in the study and presentation of them, and perhaps a different condition of human thought must prevail, before even the elements of this philosophy in its length and breadth can be given with clearness and accuracy.

If it be asked, then, what it is I propose to do, my answer is, Very little. I would gladly, however, if I could, offer to welcoming minds some, at least, of the foundation-truths of this new system of a philosophy that is wholly religious, and of a religion that is wholly philosophical.

We live in days in which science is declaring its divorce from religion; and some of the strongest and most influential of the minds now active are engaged in proving that men may still have a religion and retain their common sense, only on condition that they not only submit their belief to the legitimate criticism of science, but that they believe only what is permitted them to believe by the knowledge given them by the senses, added to that derived from consciousness, and, as a whole, treated in the same way which has been wonderfully successful in natural science; but with an utter rejection of all preternatural instruction or guidance. All other means of knowledge but those which are useful in the acquirement of natural knowledge, and all other methods or activities of thought, are renounced and rejected as irrational and impossible.

This work these men are doing in various ways; seldom with repulsive arrogance, or contemptuous and offensive denial. Far oftener, their gentleness and tolerance extend and strengthen their influence. This influence is as yet limited, in its full effect, to the few who are engaged in such studies; and is met, and in some degree neutralized, by the earnest, not to say passionate, defence of their assaulted citadels, by religionists of various names. So it is neutralized to some extent; but not very greatly, for the weapons of these defenders of religion, however energetically and skilfully used, are inadequate to the exigencies of this hard battle, because they are taken from an armory that was suited to other times. The most which they who use them try to do, is, to hold their own ground, without attempting to carry the war into the enemy's own territory, and make natural science itself a firm support, an earnest and trustworthy friend, of religion. Be the causes what they may, it is certain that doubting, denying, naturalistic views are now gaining ground, and threaten soon to permeate society.

It is to avert this danger and arrest the decay of religious belief, as well as to lay the foundations of a faith that will endure every test, and last through the ages, that this new revelation is given. Its work of reanimating and refounding religion, of clearing away the ruins which cumber the old

and immovable foundations of religion, and building upon them a new structure that will endure every test, and resist every assault, and abide the test of time, must be gradual and slow, and hardly perceptible in its early stages; for it can be wrought only through reason, and reason working in freedom,—and human reason is in these days greatly cumbered and darkened. But it is impossible for those who have studied and learned the truths taught by Swedenborg, to doubt that this work will be done; to them, the result is inevitable.

Already, a city is “descending from God out of heaven,” which “the glory of God will lighten,” — “and the nations of them which are saved will walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.” There is a science of correspondance of natural things with spiritual things, which reveals the spiritual meaning of the Word and the works of God, and of which I shall say more presently, and am perfectly aware that even a reference to this science must seem to many minds simply irrational. The interpretation which this science gives us of this prophecy, when stated in the most general terms, is this: Now, from God, by the agency of His angels, a new system of truth and doctrine is being given to men, as a city for their minds; where, although entering each through his own among the many gates, men may

dwell together in the peace of certainty, and in possession of truth irradiated with light from the knowledge that and how God is, and is the source and centre of all being; and nations will be saved from ignorance and sin by walking in this light; and the kings of the spirit, or the certain and sovereign truths of genuine knowledge of every kind, will bring their glory and honor into it, by acknowledging that it is the teacher and the mother of all wisdom.

CHAPTER II.

GOD.

THERE is a God. He is One. He is Infinite. He is the Cause of all that exists.

He is Infinite Love, Infinite Wisdom, and Infinite Power. He creates the universe from Himself. If we imagine Him causing something to be where nothing was, He is there by His Will, His Thought, His Action; or in and by His Love, His Wisdom, and His Power,—and they are Himself. We cannot, however, suppose something to be where nothing was; for He is everywhere, and creates, by efflux from Himself, whatever exists.

He is Infinite Love. It is of the essence of love to desire to give of its own to others; to give itself. This desire in God is infinite; and it is the moving cause of creation. It is a desire to give himself in all possible ways and all possible degrees. Therefore, He creates the universe. He creates it by efflux from Himself; and He creates it such that it may continue to be, in the highest possible degree, receptive of influx from Himself.

He creates the material world. The lowest form of this is the mineral world; above that is the vegetable world; above that is the animal world; and above that is man. All the worlds below man refer to him, and are for his use. We can see that they supply his needs, and minister to his life and enjoyment; and we may discern this in a degree which should excite in us gratitude and wonder. But they are adjusted to all our needs, natural and spiritual, in a way of which any knowledge that we acquire will never be complete, and to which any conception that we can form, although it be always growing, will never be adequate.

The reception of Him, in all of creation below man, cannot go far. In man, however feeble its beginning, it can increase indefinitely and for ever; for man is immortal. He begins to live here, because this home for the beginning of life is so constructed and so adapted to him, that he may here prepare himself for happiness hereafter. That happiness must consist in the fuller reception of Divine love and wisdom. They constitute God; and that man may receive these and appropriate them to himself, he is made in the image and likeness of God.

Anthropomorphism is, in these days, often used as a term of reproach. It means, literally, the ascribing of man's form to God; it means, actually, as

used, the likening of God to man. This is an error, and a great one, just so far as it degrades God to a similitude with man, and brings the infinite down to the finite. This error has been permitted, because, even in its grosser forms, — as in those ancient religions in which the gods of popular belief were not only men, but, in much of their conduct, bad men, — even in these forms it gave a definite idea and a positive belief of the existence of God to minds which were incapable of higher views. This was good, because, for a man to be wholly destitute of a belief in God is the worst calamity that can befall him. But anthropomorphism is a truth, and not an error, just so far as it preserves the whole infinitude of God; and, asserting His absolute perfection, makes that the standard of human excellence, and founds the highest hopes of humanity upon the possible approach to divinity. There can be no religion in faith or in life, without some idea of God; and man could have no idea of God, and would have nothing upon which, or by means of which, he could form such an idea, if he were totally and perfectly different from God. If he were so different that he must exclude from his idea of God all ideas derived from himself, he would have no ideas to take their place. It is declared in Genesis, that God made man in His own image and likeness. This new philosophy neither rejects this truth, nor

explains it away. It accepts it as a truth, and rests upon it its whole belief in God. And it explains this truth in such wise as to give to it new force and new distinctness, together with a clearer view of the infinite and absolute perfection of the Divine nature.

Neander, the great historian of the Christian church, finds in early Christian writers, and uses himself, the word "anthropomorphism." Of it he says: "So far as it denotes a diseased process of thought, it consists in ascribing to the Absolute Spirit the limitations and defects which cleave to the human. . . . It is based on an undeniable and inherent necessity; since man, being created in the image of God, and being a spirit in affinity with the Father of spirits, feels constraint and a warrant for framing his idea of God after this analogy. . . . It is possible to err, as well as to be right, according as the analogy is wrongly or rightly observed." In another place he says: "From the contemplation of God's self-manifestation in the creation, we are constrained to form our conception of the Divine attributes in accordance with the analogy of our own minds." We are, indeed, *constrained* to do this, by the nature He has given. And have we any right to say that He has constrained us to a falsehood?

They who make a rightful use of the resemblance

of man to God find in man love; and they carry this to the highest imaginable degree, and vest it in One who is capable of loving. They find in man wisdom, and, carrying this to its highest potency, vest it in One who can be wise. So they do with all the powers and essential attributes of manhood which they see to be good, excepting those which imply limitation and imperfection. But who or what is this One, who is thus good and wise and strong, but without limitation? They cannot imagine Him, — if, by imagination, we mean the presentment of a thing to thought, in shape. They cannot conceive of Him, — if, by conception, we mean the forming of an idea which has definite limits. But they can *believe*, — led by the tendency of a healthy human nature, and guided by a sound and intelligent logic, — they can believe that there is such a One, that there must be such a One; and, so far as above stated, He must possess the essential attributes of human nature, and so far He is a Divine Man.

A far more perfect solution of this problem is given by Christianity; and that solution is made more complete by the truths which are now given to the New-Church. But of this, I can better speak in another connection, when I treat of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, — who is Immanuel, or God with us, and God for us.

God is Man; perfect and infinite man in form: in form, but not in shape, for shape is but the expression and outward manifestation of form. It is by means of shape that form becomes apprehensible by sense and thought; and thought may then rise above shape, and think of form as it is in itself. For form we may define sufficiently, and perhaps as well as words will permit, by saying that it is the inmost nature or essential being of a thing. God is above the limitation of shape, by which all lower things are accommodated to the perceptions of his creatures. So He is above the limitations of space and time; for he is in all space without space, and in all time without time. But God is Man; and man is man, only because God's life is given to him to be his own.

God is Love and Wisdom; and man is made in the image and likeness of God, that he may receive of the Divine love and wisdom more fully. He has a will, into which the Divine love may flow, and become in him all he has of affection or feeling. He has an understanding, into which the Divine wisdom may flow, and become in him all he has of thought or perception. The infinite love of God is ever moving Him to exert, through His infinite wisdom, His infinite power. Man has strength given him, that the moving force of his will and his affections, inciting and acting through his thoughts, may cause him

to be useful, and happy in being useful. This is so in man, because it is so in God, who is the one perfect Man, and the Source and Cause of all manhood; and the infinite blessedness of God, which He is ever desirous to impart in whatever measure it may be received, springs from the exercise of His power, under the direction of His wisdom, and moved by His love. The law is universal, that, without usefulness, there can be no happiness.

In the very lowest condition of human life, and in the feeblest beginnings of human strength, there is this Divine love which has become man's love, acting through his thoughts, which are but the Divine wisdom accommodated to man's capacities, and appropriated by him; and thus he is living, moving, and acting to do the least and humblest things which a living man can do. But, from this lowest beginning, a never-ending ascent is possible.

God gives to man to be his own, to be himself; not to be a partial or imperfect God, but to be himself,—a man. Because God is perfect Man, and man lives by receiving the Divine life from God, man is man. The life flowing into him is infinitely human in its source and essence, and continues to be human in him, and constitutes him man. Because this life is given him to be his own, to cause him to be himself, he is not a mere channel through which Divine life flows, nor merely an instrument which

Divine power uses. Infinite love could not be satisfied with creating so low a creature as this. It could be satisfied with nothing less than a creature capable of receiving Divine life, and appropriating this life as his own, so that he may live as from himself, and be himself; and this with an ever-growing reception and fulness of life and happiness.

Freedom is an element of the Divine life, and, like all its elements, is infinite; and this element is not severed from this life in its inflow into man. Like all the elements of this life, it is feeble and imperfect to the last degree in its incipient and early reception, but capable of perpetual growth and development. Hence and such is human freedom, with all its possible evil, and all its immeasurable good. If its evil were not possible, neither would its good be possible, for it would not be freedom; and without freedom man could not be himself, and could not fulfil the end of his creation, by living a life ever-growing in happiness by his own efforts, and ever-rising in the character of that happiness.

The doctrine that, while man's life is wholly derived from God, it is given him to be his own,—and that it is his own, and he is himself,—must often be referred to in all attempts to present the philosophy of the New-Church, for it lies near its centre, and comes forth into every part of it. The fact that

God is infinite Love, and therefore desires to give Himself fully, accounts for this further fact, that He gives to man, who is perfectly dependent upon Him, a life which is as if independent. Nor is this a mere illusion, nor is the freedom which results from it an illusion. It is through this independence in dependence, and this freedom which is given, that God endeavors to build all men into forms most capable of happiness. But He can do this only through this freedom; and therefore only through man's consent and coöperation, and only in the degree in which man consents and coöperates. It is to man himself that God commits his character, and, therefore, his destiny. And we shall begin to comprehend the wants and the failures of humanity, and the mingling and alternation of good and evil in every thing of this life, when we throw upon the clouds and darkness which now enwrap Divine Providence the light of the truths,—that we are here only in the beginning of being; that we are here only that this beginning may be rightly directed; and that we see, in this mingling of good and evil, only the conflict between the influences which would lift us up, and our refusal and opposition, or our unpreparedness to give our consent and coöperation, in our freedom.

Among mankind, there is now a strong and very general sense of independence of God, broken

only by a feeling that, in some way, He is still our Master. This is permitted, because human progress begins from this idea of an absolute selfhood. But the first steps of a true progress are taken, when we come to some knowledge of the truth that all life, and all that constitutes life,—every affection and every thought and every faculty,—are constantly, instantly, and incessantly given us from God; but given to be our own, and to become what we choose to make them.

In the beginning of life, and without instruction, a man is wholly unable to have any thought that he lives from God, or otherwise than from himself. As his mind matures, if he receives instruction, he learns that there is a God, his Creator; and that he lives from Him. At first, this truth will be very obscure to him; he will see it imperfectly, and understand very little about it. As he advances in spiritual knowledge, this truth will grow clearer to him, and he will understand more about it and its consequences. This process may go on for ever. The wisest among the wise, the happiest among the happy, in that kingdom where all are happy, are those who see most clearly and know most certainly, that their whole life is His life given to them; given instantly and incessantly, so that they neither have nor can have any thought, affection, or feeling which is not derived from His influent life. And,

with the growing certainty of this knowledge, there is also a growing certainty that this life is given them as their own, and that they are free, because freedom is given them as an element of this life.

The sunlight, falling upon all the individuals which make up the vegetable world, is determined in its effect and manifestation by the inmost and essential form of each; and, being so determined, causes each one to be that which it is, — beautiful and fragrant, or the reverse; fruitful or poisonous. Precisely so it is with man. It is his inmost and essential form or character which determines what the influent Divine life shall become in him, and therefore what he shall be. The sunlight and the dew, absorbed by night-shade, form and ripen poison. The heat and light from the Sun of heaven, or the Divine love and wisdom, received by the sinful man into his will and understanding, — who is sinful because he does not use the power given him to resist the proclivities of his nature, — come forth as sinfulness.

It is an universal law that this inmost form of each existing thing determines what it is, although all exist by the reception of one life. To man alone something more is given; something which belongs to him as man, and constitutes him man: it is the power over his own inmost form, or over his character. A vegetable has a kind of life, but cannot

change its place; an animal has more life, for he can change his place; a man has yet more life, for he can change his character, — that is, himself; and therefore his character, and with it his destiny, are in his own hands.

If man, the creature, were utterly unlike his Creator, he would be utterly unable to have any knowledge or thought concerning his Creator; just as animals are unable. But man is in the image and likeness of God; and he is made so, that it may be possible for him to have some knowledge of God, and form some idea of Him. As he becomes better and wiser, he becomes more godlike; and as his godlikeness (or godliness) grows, so does his knowledge of God, and his wisdom concerning God. The best and most that we attain to here is but little more than nothing compared with what is possible. The wisdom of the wisest in the other life differs from our best wisdom, far more than this differs from the thought of the infant.

God is Love; pure, perfect, infinite love. Love is His motive power; it is from Him the motive power of the universe, — all the force, and all the forces of the universe, are always, and in all their action, derived from love, and are forms of love; of His love given to the universe of His creation to be its motive power. We call this force by a variety of names, because we see it under a variety of aspects.

But under all this variety of names and activities, doing the work of creation and of sustaining all that is created, force in some form is never ceasing, always active, and seen everywhere; and science is rapidly approaching the conclusion that all forces are but varying aspects of one force. As yet this is held, and that imperfectly, only in regard to material things; because science has not yet learned to look up from material things. The time will come, however, when, after science has increased its knowledge of material forces, and clearly seen their unity, it will look higher; and, becoming itself one with spiritual science, will see that all spiritual forces are one, and that they and natural forces are also, in their origin and in their inmost nature, one. What can this One be but the Divine love, which is the spring and cause of all causation?

Tell this truth now, and so tell it, if that were possible, that science would accept it, and there would be this danger: existing science would then seek to make it all material; to prove that mind was only more ethereal matter, and that "the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile," to use words already uttered by an eminent materialist. Already the conviction that all material forces are one has led some minds to the effort of bringing intellectual and moral forces within the same unity; and very ingenious are the arguments by which it is

attempted to make mind and will only a form, or at best a product, of matter. These arguments will not be permitted to prevail. The conclusion to which they point is too absolute a falsehood; and a falsehood at once degrading to science and destructive of all true philosophy.

Love is one, and Force is one; for it is but love brought forth into an infinite variety of uses, by an infinite variety of instruments. Everywhere the universal law prevails; and this love, which has become force, is determined in its aspect and in its action by the work it has to do, and by the instruments which are adapted to this work, and by which that work is done.

All the forces of the universe in all their action are but forms of love: the tornado, the earthquake, the devastating fire, "the terror by night, the arrow that flieth by day, the pestilence that walketh in darkness, the destruction that wasteth at noon-day," and the lighter or heavier blows which fall upon us every day, and bring their gifts of pain and disappointment,—all, all of these are but forms of love. But it is an infinite love which is one with infinite wisdom; and clouds never rest upon the infinite perception that it is best for the highest and most enduring interests of man, that his spiritual freedom should not be impaired. In other words, that he should not be compelled to

yield to, but led to coöperate with, the Divine goodness.

Therefore are sin, and the suffering which is its child, permitted. Therefore "are clouds and darkness round about Him." But with it all, and through it all, His love reigns and works. We are enveloped by it in the air we breathe. It shines upon us in His sunlight, and falls upon us in the soft rain and the dew, and comes to us in food and shelter; and more, infinitely more, than all this, it is ever doing all that omnipotence can do, to lead us always, in our own freedom, to look to Him with love and trust; to put away from us the hindrances that gather between Him and us; to use His gifts aright, and so convert even calamity into the blessing it was given to be.

CHAPTER III.

CREATION.

GOD cannot but create. Because He has and He is Infinite Love; and the desire to give what one has and is, is of the essence of love: this desire He has infinitely. Therefore He cannot but create those whom He may love, and to whom He may give from Himself; and for that purpose He creates the universe. But is the created universe eternal? — or was there a time when He who is eternal, and must desire to create, did not create? This question is irrational, because it carries the idea and the measure of time where time does not belong. We can never answer this question, nor can we ask it intelligently; for the reason that, while we live on earth, it is impossible for us to liberate our mind entirely from the influence of time, even if we are able to know and to acknowledge that time is only a thing of thought, indispensable for the necessities of this life, and adjusted to its uses.

He creates from Himself. He cannot create from nothing; for that which is created from nothing

must consist of nothing, and be nothing. Therefore He creates from Himself, or by an efflux of Himself from Himself. Time belongs to us, not to Him. He creates always and incessantly. Whatever is exists by a perpetual and ever present efflux from Him. The work of creation is always now. He has methods of working, derivable from and conformed to the essential order of His own being. So far as we can discern these methods, we may call them laws. But there is no mistake which more forcibly resists all comprehension of the Divine work, than that which supposes it was once done for all time; done in the past for the present and the future; done, and dismissed from Divine action. The truth that all existence is continuously caused, in the whole and in each part, in every thing, and in all that any thing is or does,—is a central and essential element in a just and rational comprehension of the Divine work.

God is All in All. But is not this Pantheism? In all ages religious believers have looked upon Pantheism with horror. They have regarded it, and for good reasons, as the very opposite, the very antagonist, of all religion, as the most plausible and seducing enemy of religion, because it appeals to and attempts to satisfy that deep-seated and inextinguishable desire of the human heart for God, by declaring its belief in the divinity of creation, and

giving to the universe the name of God. But the assertion that the universe is God, and the only God, is a most positive and emphatic denial of God. What the implanted religiousness of human nature demands is a personal God; is One to whom prayer may be directed; on whom confidence and trust may be reposed; for whom love and gratitude may be cherished, and to whom the sacrifice of obedience may be offered. Any other God than this is a God only of words, and unmeaning words; a God only of theory and not of faith or affection; a God of what may call itself philosophy, but in no possible sense a God of religion. It was of a very different God from the God of this Pantheism, that the Christian apostles four times declare Him to be All in All; and it is in a different sense from that of Pantheism that I have made use of the same phrase.

God creates the universe from Himself; but He creates it other than Himself. He creates it for His creatures, and He gives it to them. He makes it to be theirs. It is still His; but it is theirs also. He must have beings other than Himself to be objects of His love; therefore He creates them to be *themselves*.

I here again touch upon one of the points where the infinite mystery of Being comes before every mind which endeavors to investigate this mystery in the hope of learning whatever may be knowable

concerning it: and that is the reconciliation of existing evil with Divine love. The little that we can learn, is so little in comparison with the stupendous whole, so nearly nothing, that it may well be regarded as nothing.

The truth to be kept in constant recollection as the basis of all consideration of this subject is, that God creates from Love. If there be a Creator, then there must be some motive power to induce creation. We may think that this motive must be far above our possible perception, and infinitely beyond our comprehension. But need we say this? Not if we believe that man is to live hereafter, and that his happiness during the whole of his unending life must be connected in some way with his relations to his Creator; for then we should admit it as probable that he would be gifted with some power of knowing the existence and apprehending the nature of his Creator; and that this power, however feeble in its beginning, would even then enable him to discern the fundamental truths on which an ever-growing structure of knowledge might rest. A part, at least, of this fundamental truth would tell him why God created him. He could learn this only from revelation; but he would be capable of so learning it, and revelation would be given him that he might know it. Hence he is taught by revelation that God is Love. Very dimly do we see this

truth, but only so far as we see it do we know any thing about God; and only when we recognize this truth as truth, and keep it constantly before us so that we may walk in its light, can we hope to make any progress in our understanding of the Divine nature and work.

God creates every thing from Love; and man stands at the head of creation. How can we reconcile the oppressive imperfection and diversified unhappiness of man and his condition with the truth that an all-wise and all-powerful Being created him only from love? We cannot unless we believe that man is immortal, that he is capable of an ever-growing happiness; and that the imperfections and miseries we witness, and are conscious of, spring from causes which are the indispensable means of making this happiness more certain, more constant, more perfect. Then all that seems to be antagonistic to love may be reconciled with it, and made to wear the aspect and do the work of love.

Before attempting to show how this is, let us look for a moment at so much of the universe as is not man. The first statement to be made is, that all that is not man is for the sake of man. If we believe that God creates the universe to satisfy the desire of an infinite love, and that man satisfies this desire because he, and he only, is immortal and capable of an ever-growing and never-ending happiness,

then what is not capable of this, or what is not man, can meet the demand of an infinite love only by assisting and promoting man's eternal happiness; and to this end it must be adjusted.

Let it not be supposed that because all things are for man, no other thing has any value of its own. So it might be if things were created by man, the finite; but because they are created by God, the Infinite, it is not so. Each has its own value and is itself, as if it existed for itself only and not for man. All living things have their own life, and their own happiness; and this happiness is first His, and given to them by Him, and then returns to Him, and becomes again His happiness; for He is happy because they are.

And how is it with the dead things of the universe? They also make their return to Him. He is infinitely *useful*. This word may seem a strange one to apply to God; but it is so applied, because He loves infinitely to be useful,—that is, to do good. Because this is an essential and inseparable element of His nature, it passes into all the creation which He makes of Himself and from Himself. The grain of sand, the drop of water, the rock, the ocean, the planet, the sun,—each of them has its special use, and in all these uses He rejoices.

And the beauty of the world,—vast and varied beyond all conception, escaping human observation

and appreciation except in the minutest degree, — is it nothing to Him? “He that made the eye, shall He not see?” The power of perceiving and enjoying the beautiful is a part of man’s nature (a power as yet most imperfectly developed), because it is a part of God’s own nature; and, like every thing else which belongs to Him, is in Him perfect.

But if all this be so, why is there so much unhappiness in the world; so much that obstructs and hinders all use; so much that is not beautiful, and is its opposite; so much that is not good and is evil?

Again, let us remember that God is Love; that it is of the essence of love to give itself; that because His love is infinite, His desire to give Himself must be infinite; and that this infinite desire must prompt Him to give Himself unreservedly. It is precisely this which He does. He gives to the universe to be itself; He gives to every thing of the universe to be itself. He gives to man to be himself; He gives to him the power, or rather the necessity, to own his being, his life, his self-hood. And while God is All in All, there is no other Pantheism. In this way God makes the universe to be other than Him, even while it and every part of it depends upon His being for its being, perfectly, absolutely, and at every instant. It is other than Him because it is itself. It is itself because, while He gives being to it from Himself, He also gives to it to own the being that

He gives: to own it as its own. And in this truth we have a key to the mysteries of Providence.

To all that exist He gives being from Himself. If this were human giving, life given from Him would be severed from Him; but it is Divine giving; and the life which flows from Him to man, and is given to man that he may be himself, remains perfectly the life of God. His love is one with His wisdom; and both are constantly exercised to guide and lead and induce man to use aright the power and freedom which are given him that he may be himself. But they are always so exercised as to leave in his own hands, unimpaired, the power to form his own character, and thereby determine his own destiny.

Man, in the exercise of this power, sometimes abuses it. If he could not abuse it, he could not use it in freedom. He can abuse it, and he does abuse it. If we would form some conception of what would be the effect if man constantly used this power aright, we have but to think of what the opposite effect must be, when man abuses it. The effect of using this power aright is good, all good. Evil is the opposite of good; and the effect of abusing this power is evil, all evil,—for there is no evil which is not the exact opposite of some good, and is not caused by the wrongful use of a power, the rightful use of which would have produced that good.

As soon as men began to think, there must have been an effort to account for the evil existing within and around them. The abuse of freedom suggested itself long ago, and has been presented in many forms; in none of which has it been wholly satisfactory. Men could hardly help thinking that there was some evil power at work to produce evil. This belief was most definitely systematized in the latter part of the third century of Christianity under the name of Manicheanism. It spread from the far east into Christendom and prevailed widely. The central doctrine was that there had existed from eternity two principles, — one good, the other evil; God and Hyle, light and darkness; absolutely opposed to each other; everywhere meeting and always in conflict. This system was developed into a great number of doctrines, variously modified; the only thing common to them all being this eternal conflict of two opposite principles. The name has disappeared long ago. Perhaps the profession of such belief is not now to be met with. But the belief itself, in some degree or measure, is held very widely and almost universally. For is it not held of necessity by those who do not believe that all evil originated in some way from good? This would seem obvious. Good exists, and evil exists; and evil must exist from good, or else it exists from itself and by perpetual self-propagation. There are, undoubtedly,

those who say, and with greater or less sincerity of faith believe, that a God of goodness finds the evil in the universe, and uses it as His instrument of discipline or punishment; and some I suppose think that He causes it to exist that He may so use it.

It would seem certain that we must hold Manicheanism or the belief in two antagonist principles, in some form, — either as God and His antagonist, or the two in God himself, as love and something which, whether we call it justice or by some other name, is not love; or else, that we must believe that evil is man's work, and that the power of man to do evil was given to him by Divine love, and therefore for his best good. Very many have been the efforts to establish this last theory. The difficulty is, that of the many elements of this belief every one is held feebly and imperfectly. These elements are, that there is a personal, creating, and governing God; that He is essential goodness, and only that; that whatever man has he receives from God as the gift of goodness; and that among these gifts is freedom, — given because, with all its necessary liability to abuse, it must be given as the essential foundation of all that is best in character and happiest in condition: and nothing less than the best can satisfy the infinite desire of God to give happiness.

When all these truths are clearly seen and firmly held, then, and perhaps then only, can it be clearly

seen that all evil necessarily arises from the abuse of human freedom. Then, too, we shall be prepared to follow out this truth into its consequences.

It is because the destiny of man is placed in his own hands that evil comes, — moral evil and spiritual evil; evil in thought, affection, and life. And it is one of the evidences, as it is one of the effects, of the adaptation *to* man of that universe which is *for* man, that all the evil there is in man's nature or life is imaged forth in the conflicts, imperfections, and disorder in the world beneath, above, and about him. There is indeed a conflict ever going on within man and without him, between two principles, — one of which is good and the other evil. But the good one is from our Father in Heaven, and the evil is born of our abuse of the gifts of our Father. Ignorant as we are, and with our ignorance intensified and indurated by our conceit of wisdom and intellectual ability, no wonder that the relations of God with man are shrouded, not in mystery only, but in midnight darkness. No wonder that we detect in our thoughts the secret influence of the falsity which tells us that man and the universe were imperfectly constructed through a failure either of love or of power, and then left to themselves. No wonder we find it so hard to believe that perfect love, guided by perfect wisdom, is the universal motive power; and that while the power of the Omnipotent is never exerted to destroy

or paralyze the freedom of the human race; while perfect love can never withdraw that gift of freedom which perfect wisdom sees to be the indispensable condition of the highest happiness,— this same love and wisdom are constantly watchful to do, through human freedom, all that can be done to prevent, or, if that can not be, to lessen, the abuse of this gift; to remedy the mischiefs which spring from it, and, as far as is possible, to use these very mischiefs as instruments of good. Immeasurable time rolls on. Patiently and slowly the work of God goes forward; and the whole universe, with all its inhabitants and every individual in this innumerable multitude, are ever advancing as fast and as far as the law of love which governs them all permits: the law that no one can advance in wisdom and in goodness, except so far as he coöperates with the Divine influence in his own freedom.

CHAPTER IV.

THIS WORLD.

WE live here in material bodies and in a material world. But what is a material world? Surely we all know that. It is the world which we see and feel everywhere, and of which our bodies are made. Such is the answer which the senses give; and if it be not true and certain, what can be certain? And is not the philosophical question which has puzzled thinkers since the beginning of thought — What is matter? — a striking instance of the power and tendency of philosophy to bewilder thought, and darken with its subtleties what would never raise a doubt if quietly left to consciousness and common sense? Not so. It is a wholesome thirst of knowledge which prompts a thinking mind to ask, What is this world we live in? And the question cannot be asked, and any consideration given to the answer, without our finding that the answer is not easy.

Innumerable are the ways in which this question has been answered; but they all may be classed under two heads — Realism and Idealism. Realism

holds that the world outside of us is really what it seems to be: that tree, that mountain, that eloud, are just what you see that they are, and just where you see them. But Idealism replies by easy proof of the deeeitfulness of sense, and goes on to inquire into the *cause* and foundation of sensuous impressions or perceptions. It shows us that, when we look at that tree, all we see and all that the mind contemplates is a minute picture painted on the retina (or the expansion of the nerve of sight at the back of the eye); or rather, it takes a step farther, and says that all the mind ean eontemplate is the idea formed in the mind from that picture on the retina. For, say the Idealists, we have not and eannot have the least eidence that any thing but the idea exists, and matter is only a product or a form of thought; thus pre- eiseely reversing the materialistie theory that thought is but a product or form of matter.

Such is a very general statement of Realism and Idealism. But the modifications of each of them that have been at different times suggested, are innumerable; the main question — What is matter? — being no more and no better answered by any of these theories than it was when first asked. Supposing this question to be now before us, I think the principles of New-Chureh philosophy would answer it somewhat in this way.

God causes or creates the universe from Himself,

and by an efflux from Himself. This efflux is pure substance. We cannot form the slightest idea of it as it is in itself; for all that we can possibly know of it is what it appears to the mind as the mind contemplates it through the senses. It is perfectly adapted to our needs, and exquisitely adjusted to our senses, as our senses are to our mind. And the result is that this substance, becoming matter, acts on the mind through the senses, and presents all the forms and phenomena of the universe. This effect is produced in this way. The new-born babe sees the things around him; but he has no idea of distance. The moon is as near to him as the lamp on the table. He moves his limbs, and soon he moves himself. The other senses come in. He reaches toward some object, and acquires the ideas of motion, of distance, and place. He touches objects, and gets the ideas of shape and solidity. All this goes on; and, with every day, objects become more distinct to him, and stand before him, each in its place. We do all this in infancy and early childhood, from the first beginnings of sensation and thought, in the years over which oblivion rests. So we come unconsciously to those conclusions concerning external objects, which the experience of every day confirms, and which it never occurs to us to doubt. We do this, because our senses are so adjusted to our minds on the one hand as to excite these ideas in the mind; and are

so adjusted to pure substance on the other hand, that through our senses that substance excites those ideas. And, in this way, we have an external world with all its indefinite variety of objects.

This view reconciles realism with idealism. It is realistic, for it asserts that there is an actual entity, a pure substance, underlying and supporting all the forms of matter. It is idealistic, for it asserts that all these forms, with all their interacting forces, are to us what they are, by reason of the adjustment of this substance to our senses, and of our senses to our minds.

It is realistic, inasmuch as it holds that there is a positive and most real *something* which is not us; and that this something exists not *in* Nature, but *as* Nature, or as the natural basis upon which rest all our conceptions of natural things. It is idealistic, inasmuch as it asserts that this substance has form and force and manifestation because, by its relation to the senses and their relation to the mind, this substance presents itself in all natural forms and forces.

In this world we begin to live. When we have ceased to live here, we at once begin to live in another world. There also we find this same substance, and there also it is adjusted to our needs. We are then in spiritual bodies with spiritual organs of sense, and with a spiritual world to live in; all

formed of spiritual substance which exists, as material substance exists here, from a Divine source, and there as here is an adaptation of our senses to pure substance on the one hand, and to our minds on the other. That life will never end. It is therefore of immeasurably greater importance than this life, if we consider them separately. But they should not be considered separately. This life is a preparation for that life; and that life is the result and consummation of this life.

If this life is a preparation for that life, two questions suggest themselves. One is, What is this preparation for? The other is, How is this preparation made?

We can learn what this preparation is for, or what is the end to be attained by it, only by deducing it from the Divine purpose in creating us. This purpose is to satisfy the desire of a Being of infinite and perfect goodness, to create those whom He might love, and to whom He might impart as far as possible, and in an ever-growing measure, His own goodness and His own happiness.

Then another question occurs, and may present itself often while we are considering these topics, Why does not He create beings in whom this end is attained at once, and perfectly? He creates the birds, and gives to each one peculiar faculties tending to its preservation in life and its

enjoyment of life. He creates the horse, the lion, with other faculties which have the same tendency. He creates man with still other and higher faculties which, however, tend still in the same direction. Why does He not create beings who are at once invested with the faculties and qualities which would insure the end which we are told He infinitely desires? Why has He not endowed man with these faculties and qualities? Is it a want of power which prevents it, or a want of will?

The answer is, He does not do this because this is not the best thing He can do for His creatures. Far as we are from an ability to fathom the infinite and solve the mystery of being, it should not be difficult for us to see that a created being gifted with power to be himself, and hold his life as his own; enabled and assisted to work out his own happiness by his voluntary coöperation with God; beginning at the lowest point and thence ascending, step by step, finding, as he rises, this ascent opening before him, and leading upwards forever and forever, with a constantly increasing ability to work with his Father in doing good, and enjoying the happiness of goodness, — it should not be difficult to see that we have here a picture of the happiest possible of created beings. If we think this, then we must also think that this is the being which Perfect Love would create.

The earth we live on, the air we breathe, the insect, the bird, the mammal,—all alike and equally exist and live by efflux of being or of life from Him. But we are sure that this one life is received in different ways on these different planes of being. We are sure that the higher animals receive life in another way from the lower animals; and they all receive life in another way from that in which it constitutes the being of dead matter. We may use words derived from sense to express this, and say that the higher animals receive a higher life, or receive it more largely than the lower. The point I would impress is, that there are degrees in the life received, and in the kind of reception. For then we may see that there are degrees in the gifts of Divine goodness, and that the whole of the Divine purpose in the preparation of mankind in this life for another, may be summed up as the desire and purpose of enabling man, by this preparation, to receive Divine life in the greatest possible degree, and in the best possible way.

Then we come to the question, How is this preparation effected? The first and most general answer is, Through man's voluntary coöperation in all the work, because the best result is attainable in this way. The more specific answer is, By man's resisting, suppressing, and putting away from himself the qualities and proclivities which obstruct or

impair or pervert the reception of Divine life. All men receive life, and all their life, from God; for otherwise they would not live at all, for man does not live from himself. But man, and man alone, can pervert this influent Divine life, because he alone has freedom and the power of self-determination. And he receives life without perversion, and in the manner in which God desires that he should receive it, when, and as far as, love continues to be love in his will, and wisdom continues to be wisdom in his understanding. Divine love received by man must indeed continue to be in him love of some kind for ever; for otherwise he would have no motive power, no life. But only when it is the love of others does it continue to be the love it was in its Divine source. So the Divine wisdom must remain in him, or he would have no power of thought. But if the love is itself perverted into self-love, it perverts that wisdom into falsity.

It follows of necessity, that the qualities and tendencies which man must resist and put away are those which are most opposed to love and wisdom, and would therefore resist their entrance into himself, or enfeeble them, or pervert them into their opposites. The opposite of love is self-love, and its child is the love of the world for the sake of self; or, in fewer words, selfishness and worldliness. These things then are what we must resist and put away, if

we would become capable of receiving Divine life without perversion, and with it, true happiness.

As all revelation is given to man to aid him in preparing for another life, it is especially aimed against the evil things which prevent or mar this preparation. All the commandments have this aim; and all are summed up in the two commandments, to love God with all the heart, and to love the neighbor as one's self. Revelation cannot go beyond this, except to explain these commands, and show why they were given, and how they may be obeyed, and what is the effect of obedience to them. And this the new revelation places in clear light.

It tells us that our life is Divine life, given us to be our own; that infinite love prompts this gift, because it is the foundation of all existence and of all happiness; that love of others is the essence of this life; and therefore the measure of our happiness must be our reception and appropriation of love,—or our happiness must be measured in kind and in degree by the kind and measure of our loving. The best and highest possible love must be our love for Him who is best and highest, and our infinite benefactor. We are therefore commanded to love the Lord our God with all the heart and soul, because, if we do so, His life, which is His love, becomes our own life without perversion; and, in the degree in which it is so, we are happy.

We must also love our brother as ourself. Our Father has given His children to each other as objects of love, that so all may learn to love, and all may be happy. In the immaturity of beginning life, we can only love each other. We are as yet incapable of knowing God or of loving Him; but we may love each other. Because the love of the neighbor is "like unto" the love of God, it trains and educates us for that consummating love. As our eyes are opened to see Him in His works and word, and in the love and wisdom manifested in them, our hearts are opened to love Him; and if we have learned to love our brethren, it is just that love which opens our hearts to this higher love. Henceforward, these two loves grow forever; not independent, but indissolubly connected; not separated but united: one as the centre, the other as the circumference. If we have learned to love our brethren aright, we love them because they and we are children of one Father, and co-partakers of His life and His love. The more we love Him in the light of this truth, the more we shall love them. The more we love them, the more we shall love Him who, as a crowning work of His infinite mercy, has given them to us that we may love them.

It is because He is Love, that He is the source of love; for all love is but His love flowing forth from Him. He creates the inanimate world for the ani-

mate world. He creates the animal world; they cannot look up to Him and return His love to Him; but He nevertheless created them in love, and cares for them in love. He creates man, and man may look up to Him; and from man, the Divine love which has become man's love, may return to Him who gave it. Then is the circle completed; and God is infinitely happy, because the end of creation is accomplished, and He has children to whom He can impart of His own happiness.

For this end all things are provided and governed, and to this end all things tend. Therefore it is that He has given us laws, obedience to which is the direct and certain way of overcoming and putting away the evil tendencies and lusts which oppose themselves to our unselfish love of the neighbor and of Him. There is no religion which has not these laws, and which does not give instruction that will save men from their sins. Hence we may now believe that all on earth, be their place and name what they may, if they are faithful to the best instruction they receive, may learn to love their brethren and their Father; and so prepare for that heaven where that love — always one with wisdom — reigns, and fills all with the light and life they are prepared to receive.

Wherever we are, whether in this world or in the other, it is the desire, the infinite desire, of

our Father to give to us all the happiness He can give. But while we live here, He can not forget the end, the purpose, for which he makes us to live here; and that is, to prepare for living hereafter. In every particular of every life, a constant reference to our eternal interests governs the Divine Providence. Those interests are never subordinated to our temporal interests. These last are not forgotten or disregarded; for as much of happiness of every kind is given to us by Him while we are here as is compatible with His primal and constant regard for the things of eternity. All the events and circumstances of life are so shaped and so governed, that we may have the utmost possible aid in preparing for an eternal life. All success and all enjoyment are given us, which would not lessen or interfere with the formation of a character susceptible of true and eternal happiness. When the one great end and purpose for which we live here requires that disappointment, suffering, or calamity should befall us, they come; but they are measured precisely by our needs, and are productive of good, if we make that result possible. We die, and then enter upon our new life. And as happiness can be given to us here, only so far as it is compatible with our preparation for that life, so in that life no happiness is or can be given but that which that preparation has made it possible for us to receive, and therefore possible for Him to give.

There are those who begin life on earth, and end it before this preparation could possibly be made. They die in an hour or a day, or in infancy or childhood, or in youth, before the power of self-determination is fully developed. Or they live many years in a condition of imbecility. What is their destiny? A happy one,—always a happy one. They have not harmed themselves by the abuse of their human freedom of choice between good and evil, because they never fully possessed this freedom. They have not been able to close their hearts against good influences by the voluntary choice of evil rather than good. If they died young, they grow to maturity in the other life. If they were imbecile in this life because the material brain or nervous system was an imperfect instrument of the mind, death has cast this impediment away, and their spiritual body becomes the instrument which their material body was not. They are happy, because the impediments to happiness have never grown with them into strength, and been confirmed into dominant principles of character and life. What germs or possibilities of good are in them by inheritance become like living seeds planted in a kindly soil, where the sun of heaven shines on them, and the dews of heaven fall on them. As they grow in heaven, instruction is given them, and they welcome it. They are shielded from the assaults of those

whose influence could, to them, be only harmful. They receive all the happiness of which their spiritual natures are susceptible; they know whence it comes, and who it is that protects and preserves them. They receive it in innocence, and respond to it with grateful joy.

CHAPTER V.

THE OTHER WORLD.

ALL men die; and all, when they die, live again. Death in this world is birth into another world. The first question this fact suggests is, What is this other world, — of what does it consist?

The answer is similar to that already given to the question, Of what does this present world consist? Pure substance, flowing from God, becomes matter in this world; because our senses are so adjusted to it on the one hand, and to our minds on the other, that all the phenomena of an external world exist for us. When at death we are born into another world, we have left matter behind us, but not substance. That same pure substance, flowing forth from its Divine source, is there in the other world as it was here, and of it are formed our bodies and their organs. We have senses, and these so adjusted to this substance on the one hand, and to our minds on the other, that this substance becomes for us there also an external world, as it did here.

But is that world the same as this world? It is

not the same. It is a spiritual world, and the world we live in first is a material world. In some respects it is like this world, while in others it is altogether different. Both worlds are precisely suited to our needs; this world is suited to our needs while we live in it, and that world is suited to our needs when we are there. The similarities between the two worlds come from the fact that we are the same persons there that we were while here. There is no change in our identity; none in our essential nature.

The differences between that world and this come from the fact, that the purpose for which we live in this world is altogether different from that for which we live in the other. We live in this world to prepare for the other. We live here to change our characters, our wills, our very natures; to remove from ourselves those qualities and tendencies which would hinder our happiness in the other. The Divine purpose in creating us is, that we may live forever in an unending condition of happiness. The Divine purpose in causing us to begin life in this world is to provide us with the means of removing from ourselves the hindrances to happiness. This we can only do by resisting them; by a conflict with them. Let the plain truths which belong to this matter not be forgotten. One is, that God cannot remove our tendency to self-

ishness and sin for us. Another is, that, while we must do this ourselves, we can not do it without His help. The third is, that His help we are sure to receive; and, by our acceptance of it, and our co-operation with Him, this work can be done, and is done.

Life in this world is a life of conflict. In a part of this conflict, we are conscious of it; and voluntarily contend against evil, and on the side of good. Another part of this conflict is waged within us, and for us, and through us, by that Divine power which is fighting our battle. We may feel it only as a season of doubt and darkness, of suffering and distress. But here, too, we have much to do in determining the issue of this conflict; and if it ends in the victory of the right over the wrong, we are strengthened for every farther conflict. The value of that which is done within us and for us, without our consciousness and coöperation, consists in its preparing us to coöperate in freedom and with consciousness in the efforts of Divine Providence to reform us. We undergo temptations; we are softened by suffering; calamity comes to weaken our selfishness and worldliness, or some strong excitement awakes or invigorates our good resolves and purposes. Then there comes a time for us to determine whether all these things are good for us or not. That time comes when calmness and quiet return, and we

come into our ordinary state of feeling and of life, and our power of self-determination is restored. Then are they — our feeling and our life — better than they were? Are the lessons which were taught us in those states remembered? Are the resolutions we formed carried into effect? This is the test; for if they are, we have *in character* advanced a step forward in the way of life. If they are not, we have fallen backward. It is one battle, one conflict, from the beginning to the end. And that this battle may be fought by us and for us, matter is here vested, so to speak, in fixed, indurated, unyielding forms, by which it is capable of resisting us, and reacting against us. Moments, or it may be hours, of peace occur when we rest from the conflict, and a foretaste of the peace we may enjoy hereafter is given us. But soon the battle begins again; and, during the whole of earthly life, every man is more or less compelled to do or to be what he would not do or be, and more or less fettered and constrained by his surroundings.

This is the universal doom; because to all men is given the capacity and opportunity of preparing for another life; and this work can only be done in, by, and through effort and conflict. Therefore, this resisting and reacting world is given us wherein we may do this work. This work of establishing a permanent character is done by all who live: they can

not help doing it; but they may do it as they choose. They cannot help becoming here that which they will continue to be hereafter. But they may become whatever they choose to become. Then they die; that is, they enter into another life,—another way of living. And what is the world in which they then live?

If we live in this world to prepare for that world, it would seem reasonable to believe that the two worlds cannot be altogether different. We serve here an apprenticeship to the art of living happily. Assuredly, the way in which we are to live when our apprenticeship is over cannot be so totally unlike our life here, that the habits we here form of loving and of living ease at once at death, and are impossible in that condition of being to which we are introduced by death. Of what value or what efficacy could such a preparation be? How could it be a preparation?

But if on this ground we assume a measure of similarity between these two lives, there are reasons which compel us to believe that there are also important differences. We have left the material body behind us. We live here, to prepare by effort and by conflict for the other life; and a hard, unyielding material world is given us for that purpose. We live there, not to prepare for that world, but to manifest and develop the preparation we have made

in this life; and the world we there live in is not the hard, unyielding material world we live in here. We have gone away from the world in which the substance of being is vested in resisting and indurated forms. That resistance and reaction against us were needed while the conflict of preparation was going on. But the conflict is over; and, instead of it, we have now its result. The same Divine substance is where we are after death, which gave us bodies and an external world before death; it gives us now spiritual bodies, and an external world formed of spiritual substance. This substance, as spiritual substance, is as exquisitely adjusted to our senses, and through them to our minds, as it was as matter. It is as perfectly adapted to our needs now as it was before, and becomes for us an external world as it did before. But we no longer need the assistance or the encumbrance of indurated and reacting matter, and we are delivered from it. But how can this be, if we have spiritual bodies composed of organs of sense? If, in those bodies, we live in an external world composed of spiritual substance, which is adapted to our spiritual bodies and their organs as perfectly as the material external world was adapted to our material bodies and their organs, how can that spiritual substance be more yielding or less refractory than material substance is here?

An answer can be given only by some consideration of Space and Time. The strongest intellects have been exhausted in the effort to say precisely what these are. I do not propose to present the metaphysical views which have been held, nor to add another to them; but shall confine myself to those things which are certain. In the first place, they are not entities; they are not things which have a distinct and positive existence by themselves. How far they are products of thought, or in what words their relation to thought may best be expressed, has been the subject of never-ending discussion. I say, only, that they are laws or effects of thought; they are these, whatever else they may be. They are laws or effects of thought; or, if we like it better, we may say, necessities of thought. We cannot think of external things without them. We cannot think of any external object without thinking of it as existing in time and in space. Not only are space and time laws or necessities of thought, but they are as much laws or necessities of action as of thought; for we can perform no action whatever except in time and in space. Moreover, they fix impassable limits to action, and exercise an absolute control over it, and thought and will are powerless before them. I think of the next room, and wish I were there; but only, by using so much of time and passing over so much of space, can I be

there. If I think of England, and wish to be there, it can be only by using much more time and passing over much more space. If a bright star attracts me and I wish I were there, time and space are too much for me; and, if there were no other hindrances, would make it impossible. They exercise this control, not in motion only, but in all action. I wish to build a house, and I form a distinct idea of what I desire it to be; but I must appropriate a portion of space, and use up in suitable efforts a portion of time, before my house can be built. And this is as true of every action; for I can not move my finger except in the requisite space and time. I may diminish these very much, but escape from them I can not.

The reason of this is, that space and time are in this world vested in that unyielding, resisting, and reacting matter which is needed for the purposes for which we live in this world, and are thus made permanent and independent of men. But when we die, these purposes no longer exist. We are no longer preparing to live, but are living in the way our preparation has fitted us for; because we need there, just as we do here, instruments by which we may take cognizance of others, and they take cognizance of us; and also need things to use, and organs and faculties by which we make use of them; we have there bodies and organs of sense and thought, and

an external world of inexhaustible variety. Because we have all these, and they are so far like what we have known here that our experience will not be lost upon us, we need space and time that we may recognize ourselves and others, and make use of the things about us; or, in one word, live. But we no longer need *such* space and time as we had in this world: we no longer need their restraint and compulsion, and these pass away; but we do need as much as before their assistance, and that we have. We may express the difference in few words, thus: In this world, space and time control thought and will; in that world, thought and will control space and time.

For example: Things there have shape and place; they are near together or far apart; we move through space to approach another or go from him when we wish to do so; and we see things moving, slowly or rapidly, through space. To that extent, we have the assistance or instrumentality of space and time; but they no longer obstruct us. We move through spiritual space and time by thought and will, as we will, without painful effort. If they whom we desire to see and to be with at any moment are far off, the thought and the desire bring us together. Thought and desire produce presence in this world, but they do this subject to the impediment of space and time; and, in some cases, this impediment can

not be overcome. Thought and desire produce presence in the other world; and space and time have no power to hinder it.

Externals are created through *internals*, or the objects of sense through and by thought and affection. All the various things about us, which together compose the world in which we live, were created through and by the things within human minds,—or the thoughts in their understanding, and the affections in their will. This law is in full force now, and in this world, but is almost wholly concealed from us. In the other world, it is not only in full force, but always cognizable. There we are minds, or thoughts and affections; they compose us, and constitute our personality and our identity; but not they alone. If we try to think of disembodied mind; of thinking while there is nothing that thinks, of loving while there is nothing that loves, of acting while there is nothing that acts,—we soon find that we are trying to think of that which can be only nothingness. There we are, in essence, minds; and so we are here. There we are, in existence, as much as we are here, minds in bodies, exquisitely organized, and surrounded with a world exquisitely adapted to us. Here, it is through minds that bodies are formed in adaptation to them, and the world around us is formed in adaptation to us. But we know it not. There, too, our

bodies and our external world are created through our minds, and in adaptation to them. And there we know that it is so.

Here and hereafter, the external world is created through or by the instrumentality of the internal world. But here, the external world of each person is not formed through or by his thoughts or affections. Here, men of all kinds mingle; for the purposes of this life require that it should be so. An external world which corresponded to one man would not suit his neighbor. The external world of mankind is therefore the common resultant of the thought and affection of mankind through an indefinite period; and is vested in enduring matter, which gives it a measure of permanence. There, the law of affinity brings those together who are interiorly like each other; and the external world about each society corresponds to all who are within it. Because it is not vested in hard and enduring matter, it changes as they change. It is as permanent as their states are; and, therefore, in its general features, may be more permanent than any thing on earth, while in its details it may be changeful, because it is always the mirror of those whom it corresponds to and represents.

So long as we live in this world, we live here for a definite purpose, and we live only for that pur-

pose; and, therefore, when that purpose is accomplished, as far as it will be here, we die and go elsewhere. So long as we live here for that purpose, we live in surroundings adapted thereto, and think and feel accordingly. It must be very difficult therefore for us, while we live here, to form an exactly defined idea of a life and a world so different from this, as that life and world must be. And yet, if it be one which we enter upon at death, and we are there the same persons which we are here, that life can hardly be so different from this, that it must be impossible to form any idea of it. The two essentials which are not to be lost sight of in our efforts to form this idea are, first, that we are the same persons there as here, and need and have an external world suited to our needs and capacities. The second is, that there we are free from that oppressive control of matter, and time, and space, which would not be useful to us there. Through us are formed our surroundings, and they are such as we; that is, as our thoughts and affections make them. They are our inner selves projected into *outness*, so to speak; and thus they constitute an external world, which cannot but be exactly adapted to our wants, our capacities, and our use, and a mirror in which we see ourselves.

Let us sum up what has been said of this world

and of the other, of the likeness between them and the difference between them. We have, as St. Paul says, a spiritual body. We have that body now. It is within the material body, and fills it, and gives life to it; for the material body without the spiritual body is only dead matter. The spiritual eyes look through the material eyes, the spiritual ears hear through the material ears, the spiritual fingers feel through the material fingers. In other words, the soul while in the material body makes that body live, and through it perceives the things of this material world. We die. Our material eyes, ears, and fingers remain for a time just what they were. But they neither see, nor hear, nor feel. Why? Because the spiritual body is withdrawn from them; and this is all that death means. Our spiritual body rises,—that is, we, in our spiritual body, rise from the material body. Then we are in a spiritual body, which is like our material body in limbs, members, organs, and senses. If our spiritual body had not had all these, those of our material body would not have lived; for they would have been only dead matter, which they become as soon as the spiritual body leaves them.

If we rise in a spiritual body, which is like our material body, we need an external world to live in and to make use of, just as much as we needed it here. And we have it just as much. Why should

we not? This natural world is formed primarily of pure substance; and the mind, acting through the senses, perceives it as this world, and as all things in it. That same substance is there also. And there the mind, acting through the senses, perceives the spiritual world as it perceives this world while here. To our mind and our spiritual senses, the spiritual world is the same thing that the material world is to our mind and our senses when we are clothed with a material body. In some respects it is the same thing. But it differs in other most important respects. This life is a life of preparation through conflict; therefore, the things of this world are vested in untractable, indurated, and resisting forms. It would not be well for us to command them absolutely by our will; for the very purpose for which we live here is not to indulge, but to resist, our will, and change it by conflict. And during this life, the things around us are just such as may help us to fight the battle of life. Mind and will have some power over them, but that power is imperfect and obstructed; and when we wish to have our own way, this world often answers No. The other life is not a life of preparation. That work is over; and the life there is one of result and consummation. Therefore, we do not need this resistance of unyielding matter, and we do not have it. Spiritual substance is no longer clothed in un-

tractable, indurated, and resisting forms, but is spiritual substance only. All the things of that world are the ready instruments of mind and will; and mind and will have there a supreme control of their external world.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WORLD OF SPIRITS.

WE always have a spiritual body. While we live in this world, this spiritual body is clothed with a material body. It fills this material body and animates it. The material body lives only because the spiritual body fills and animates every part of it. At death, the spiritual body is withdrawn from the material body. The material body, by reason of age, disease, or injury, becomes so ill adapted to the spiritual body, that the spiritual body can no longer fill and animate and act through the material body. Then it leaves the material body, and lives out of it. This is death. The spiritual body is not created by or at death. It is only separated from the material body by death. It does not then begin to live, for it always lived within the material body, and gave life to this body; but it then begins to live as only a spiritual and substantial body, and not within a material body.

While we live within a material body, or upon earth, we live, as has been repeatedly said, for the

purpose of preparing for a life out of the material body. This preparation is made by determining our will, our character, our ruling love. What that love is, we are. What that love is at death, we remain. But with very few persons is this ruling love fully developed and freed from all disguise and all admixture, so long as they live on earth. With all, or nearly all, habits are formed, motives felt, and affections indulged, which, in a greater or less degree, conflict with and modify their ruling love, and perhaps conceal it even from themselves. In this condition we pass into the spiritual world and begin to live there. But this is not the condition in which we are to live forever. That must be a condition in which the ruling love is freed from all conflicting or qualifying influences. Our external must be at one with our internal. That is to say, our life in action, our manifested character, must be the same with our inmost life or love. If we live in this world to prepare for the other world by determining here what our character shall be there, so, in the first stage of our existence there, we prepare for living in that character in a complete, unimpeded, and manifested manner.

This result is attained through various means, and in a shorter or a longer time. These means are adapted to the end they are to produce by Him who knows perfectly what we are within, and how we

may best become without that which we are within. They may take the form of instruction, or of discipline; and, if need be, of painful discipline; and they are continued until their end is accomplished and the final result reached. When that end is accomplished, the result is that the man stands forth the embodiment and personification of his ruling love, which governs every feeling, every thought, every word, and every act. Precisely what he is, he seems to be; and he is known to be that, and only that, by himself and by others. Disguise is no longer possible, and is not desired or attempted. There is no longer any conflict of motives, or uncertainty of purpose, or wavering in act. The man is wholly himself; and that which he is, he is for eternity.

A principal means by which this end is accomplished consists in bringing the will and the understanding, the affections and the thoughts, the belief and the love, into unity. This is never completely the case in this world. In most men, the knowledge and the belief are above the love and the life; in some they are below. In all men there is more or less of contradiction between that which they desire, and perhaps do, and that which they know to be right, and perhaps inwardly love. St. Paul says, "What I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do." There are those who are always aware how much their affections and desires fall short of what

the truth they know requires of them; and they are earnest in their efforts to bring them into harmony, and lament the inherited tendencies or other evil influences which obstruct their efforts. None in this world complete this work, because none subdue and suppress perfectly all tendencies to wrong. But in the other life, if the ruling love is good, by various means which infinite wisdom supplies, it works itself clear of whatever conflicts with it. And then there comes, to those who are good, peace—the peace of God, which passes all understanding that is possible in this life.

The state or condition in which these changes are going forward, and which cause not an alteration of the essential character, but a development and manifestation of it, Swedenborg calls “The world of Spirits;” giving it this name, I suppose, because those who are in that state have left the natural body, and are therefore spirits, but are not yet angels, nor have they yet gone down to be with those who have chosen not to be angels.

To some readers the thought may occur, Why carry forward into the other world the struggles and limitations, and slow and wearying progress of this? If at death the question, what we are, is settled, He who reigns there might surely assign us our place without waiting for the result of this tedious process. We may answer: He reigns in this world as

in that; and yet we know that life here is a series, and, it may be, a long and painful series, of efforts, and alternate success and disappointment; and progress is, at best, gradual and slow and interrupted. That is the way of God in all of His working that we know; and it is but reasonable to infer some analogy between the known and the unknown, or between life in this world and the life of the same persons in the next world.

We might think this, even if we could see no reason why this should be so, either here or there. But we may see a reason for it, — not *the* reason; not the whole council of God, but *a* reason. For we may find it in the truth that God does all of His work through living, rational, moral, and free agents, which can be done in that way. The greatest blessing He can confer on them is that of doing His work, or working with Him. The best evidence of His infinite goodness is in the fact that He has given to His creatures this power of working with Him. All of His creatures, even to the components of the inanimate world, are His instruments, and are always doing His work. To man alone is given the power of doing this consciously and rationally, and in his freedom, or by his voluntary choice. God has given to man the ownhood of himself. This is equally true while he is living in this world and preparing for the other; and while he is in the world

of spirits, removing from his character all that disguises it or conflicts with its ruling principles; and also when this work too is done, and he takes the place he has made himself fit for.

Through all this course he cannot take one step, except by the strength given him. Through it all he is guided, led, and helped in every possible way that does not take from him his freedom, or his power to make of himself, and to be himself, what he would.

In the beginning of life it is impossible for us to have any other thought than that we live from ourselves, with divers hindrances to our will, which we contend against as we can. Afterwards, we get glimpses of the truth that we live from God, and under His government; and must obey Him if we would be happy. So it is in the life of every man; and so it has been in the life of mankind. We have reached a point in human progress, in which we can at least begin to see, if we will, that we live from Him, and constantly from Him, in the highest and most absolute sense; that we depend upon Him for life, and all that constitutes life, perfectly and constantly; and that, while He is ever doing all that infinite love can prompt and infinite wisdom discern, which will help us to make our destiny a happy one, that destiny and that happiness are placed in our own hands.

They are now taught this great truth, who are willing to learn it. Only they can learn it; and they must learn it for themselves, and in their own freedom: they must see it through their own mental eyes. Very imperfectly can any see it now. Very dimly, and only in a most general way, and as a mere possibility, can some see it; and in the vision of others it will be distorted. Slowly the day may come, which this dawning light promises. But it will come surely, and as soon as shall be permitted by that law of our being, which enables these gifts of Divine Mercy to reach us only as fast and as fully as we can be brought into a condition to receive them willingly, and with all our hearts. But still there is for us the hope, that if this willingness be established within us as of our life, we may, after death has cast this body and its defilements aside, have our darkness enlightened, our weakness strengthened, and the stains of this world cleansed away; and all that is within us of true life, even if it be no more than a living germ, developed into the fulness of its stature, whatever that may be.

CHAPTER VII.

DEGREES.

ONE of the novel doctrines of this new philosophy is that of "Degrees." It continually presents itself in the consideration of this philosophy, and it may be well to offer now a brief sketch of it.

Degrees are of two kinds. One of them is that by which a thing grows larger or smaller, and becomes more or less, without change in its nature. Thus, that which is warm may grow warmer, or less warm; that which is bright, more or less bright; that which is sweet, more or less sweet, — and so on indefinitely. Such degrees as these Swedenborg sometimes called continuous degrees, for they run into one another by a certain continuity. The thing which changes in this way makes no change in its nature or essential character; it remains always on the same plane of being, or on the same level; as for example when it changes, by increase or diminution, from larger to smaller, from finer to grosser, or from rarer to denser, — as when the air so changes but always remains air. And as through all these

changes the thing remains on the same plane of being, these degrees are also, and perhaps better, called degrees of Breadth.

There are, however, degrees of another kind; not continuous, but discrete, — by which word we mean distinctly separate. A thing changing by these degrees becomes another thing; it is higher or lower than it was before in the scale of being; and these discrete degrees are therefore called degrees of Height. The most general example I can give of them is end, cause, and effect. The end is that for which all that follows is. It moves or puts in action the cause, which then produces the effect that is sought. In that effect the cause is operative, and the end is satisfied. Of these three degrees the end is highest, the cause intermediate, and the effect lowest; or, we may say, the end is first, the cause intermediate, and the effect last. These three degrees belong necessarily to every thing which exists; for whatever exists, exists for some *purpose* which would not be accomplished if it did not exist; and it exists because for this end it is *caused* to exist; and it is itself the *effect* of the end operating through the cause. By the “end” thus used is meant much the same — but not precisely the same — as the “final cause” of the old philosophies; while what I call simply the cause is there called the “proximate” or “efficient cause;” but I

prefer, and use, Swedenborg's phraseology of end, cause, and effect.

Another illustration of this same triad may be seen in affection, thought, and act. There can be no act, unless there be first some affection or feeling in the form of wish or desire for the act. This affection prompts the thought, and through the thought it causes the act. It is obvious that a man would not and could not do anything, if perfectly devoid of all affection or desire; for these are the motive force that sets in action all motion, and without them there could be no action. But it is equally certain that this desire or wish acts only through the thought which it excites. Although a man had a desire, however strong, if he had no capacity for thought, he would not be conscious of any desire, or know that he had such a desire; and still less would he know how to carry this desire into effect. But the desire sets him thinking; he becomes conscious of his desire, and devises the way of gratifying it; and then he does gratify it in the appropriate act.

These three discrete degrees exist in every act; but there are also all manner of continuous degrees in each of them, or in the strength of the affection or desire, in the adequacy of the cause, and in the completeness of the act. This man desires earnestly to have a house; and the desire prompts multitudi-

nous thoughts about it, as to how he shall hire the house that comes nearest to his wishes; or, if he builds, he reflects, and confers with experts, until he has decided what plan within his means will best suit his wish, and then he thinks out and provides the ways of building his house, and at last builds it. That man or that boy desires to know how to read; he thinks of the means by which he may learn to read; and then, by long-continued use of these means, he acquires some measure of this learning, and reads, and completes his knowledge, more or less, by practice. This girl wishes to play upon a piano; uses the means which she thinks best adapted to enable her to do this, and, after more or less practice, plays, better or worse.

In all these instances it is obvious that there is a specific desire or affection; that this prompts the thoughts specifically adapted to the desire, and, by means of them, carries the desire into effect. But presently, the man learns to read so well that he is perfectly unconscious of the wish to read each word, or of the thought that reads it, or of the motions of his fingers by which he turns the pages. The girl practises diligently for years, and at last she will play a piece of familiar music, conversing with those who sit by her side, unconscious of the wish or the thought which causes her fingers to strike the keys; and she is equally unconscious that she strikes them,

and does not know that she hears the sounds she makes, unless some mistake or discord calls her attention to them; then the desire, the thought, the effect, all come again into consciousness, and she corrects the mistake. Perhaps the most universal instance of the same kind is in walking. At first, this is learned by the process of desiring and thinking out, and then taking, each step. At last we walk without any thought of the steps we take, unless something calls our attention to them. I have read that the late Dr. Chalmers usually counted his steps as he walked; and this habit became so fixed, that he did it without effort, and without its interfering with any conversation he might be carrying on, and perhaps without consciousness unless his attention was called to it.

It has become rather a fashion in modern philosophy to deny that there is desire, or thought, or intention, in these cases where habit has made the desire, the thought, and the act so easy as to be unnoticed. The effects are sometimes said to be produced by "reflex action," a phrase recently invented; or the motions have become automatic (that is to say, they do themselves), through habit. But this is a mistake. These motions are just as voluntary; that is, they are, each of them, as much the result of a specific desire, thought, and purpose, as those earlier motions of the same kind, which required a strong desire and

an earnest effort in the beginning, but of which the strength and the earnestness have gradually lessened as they became unnecessary.

An important truth in relation to these three degrees is, that as the two higher terminate in the last and lowest, all are in that: all close or ultimate in that. The end is there attained; the means are there operative and effectual, and thus the end and the means ultimate in the effect.

It has been said that this trinity, or tri-unity, of end, cause, and effect, is universal. It is so, because it is supremely in God, the author of all existence. In Him it is Love, Wisdom, and Power; all infinite because His; and all imaged forth in the love, thought, and action of man, because he is created in the likeness of God. His love is an infinite desire for such ends as are proper to perfect love. His infinite wisdom is one with His love, and directs His infinite power in producing its appropriate effects. The effect is creation; and in this His love and His wisdom are ultimated.

Firsts, intermediates, and lasts (or ultimates) are in whatever exists. The universal end of creation is to be found in God. In Him is the divine desire or purpose for which all created things exist. They are all created by Him to be His instruments, and are all used by Him as His instruments, whereby His purpose is carried into effect. But this trinity

exists also, as has already been said, in each one of the things which exists. Every grain of sand exists for the sake of some use it performs or subserves. It is so created that it may perform that use. It does perform it, and in the use, which is the last or ultimate degree, the higher degrees are ultimated. Nothing whatever could exist unless the end, cause, and effect were in it; and the end and the cause are ultimated in the effect.

That which is the effect or ultimate in one series may be the instrument or mediate in another series; indeed, it always is so in one sense. Man may accomplish a purpose in producing an effect, and stop there, making no use whatever of the effect. But it is never so in Divine causation. There, every effect produced becomes at once an instrument by which a further effect is produced. One series of these degrees may be found in the Divine purpose, as the first; the spiritual world through which and by means of which the material world is created, as the intermediate; and the material world itself, as the effect in which the higher degrees of this series are ultimated. But then the Divine purpose or end at once uses this material world, and every thing in it, as the instrument for effecting a further purpose, and, when this is effected, it becomes the instrument for an effect beyond it: and this with no exception and no cessation.

While this series is in all things, it manifests itself differently in different things. It has always a tendency to manifest itself, or come into expression and form; and this is especially the case in all organisms. Thus there is in the human body that series which is universal: the end or purpose for which it is, the construction or mechanism which is the instrument by which this end is reached; and lastly, the operation of this mechanism by which this end is carried out into effect.

But, beside this, there is in the very shape of the human body an expression of this series. The head is at the summit, and originates all movement or action. The heart and lungs, and the other viscera, are the instruments by which the vital force from the brain disseminates life and strength and activity through the frame and causes all action. Then the limbs, which are the ultimates of the series, do the work which carries into effect the purpose for which the body or the man exists.

The hands and the feet are the ultimates of the human body. They may help us to understand a law laid down by Swedenborg as widely prevailing, and often referred to by him,—the law that power resides in the ultimates. In the hands and feet, as the ultimates of the human body, the power of doing the work for which the body exists, resides. The brain is as far from them as possible; they cannot

impel the blood like the heart, nor purify it like the lungs; nor can they see, or hear, or smell, or taste. But all that the other organs do ends in enabling them to do their work. Cut off the hands and feet, and however well all that remains may do its duty, the man is physically powerless. But let them do their duty, and the other organs of the body no longer work in vain, for the feet and hands are the ultimates of all the rest, and carry into effect the end and aim for which all the rest work and live.

Mr. Tyndall, in the address to which we have already referred, says: "I discern in that matter, which we in our ignorance, and notwithstanding our profound reverence for its creation, have hitherto covered with opprobrium, the promise and the potency of every form and quality of life." This is regarded by everybody as a declaration of materialism. It would seem, indeed, that he himself regards it as materialism of some sort; for he goes on to say: "The 'materialism' here enunciated may be different from what you suppose, and, therefore, I crave your gracious patience to the end." Nevertheless, these words have been considered not only as a declaration of materialism, but as a bold statement of a view held by leading scientists of the day; and not hitherto avowed, either from timidity, or from an opinion that the public mind has not

heretofore been prepared to look upon this view, when presented without disguise or veil. And it has been attacked in all quarters, or by religious writers of every name; and, in fact, by all but those who welcome it, because it is a declaration of materialism. In all this there seems to me a mistake. I consider Mr. Tyndall's statement in some measure true; an imperfect, one-sided, incomplete statement of the truth. What it needs for its completeness is the farther truth that all the promise and potency in matter are derived from above matter, and are carried forth into action and effect by the inflow of that which is higher than matter.

The series of end, cause, and effect have already been presented in many forms, and the lowest and last term of the series has been called its ultimate; and it has also been stated as another law of this trinity, that its power (force, energy, *vis*) resides in the ultimates. Of the series, God, the spiritual world, and the material world, — or God, spirit, and matter, — the material world or matter is the ultimate. This series includes all that is. In God's desire, design, or purpose, is the end; or that for which all things are, and which originates all existence. He creates the spiritual world, and by and through this as the causal instrument employed He creates the material world; and here the purpose of

God is carried into effect. This purpose is the creation of a universe of beings to whom he may impart His own life, His love, and His wisdom, and give it to them as their own; while they, receiving life from Him, and knowing that He is their constant Creator and Father, using their own strength in the acknowledgement that it is their own only because He gives it them to be their own, may, under His guidance, and with His aid, enable Him to form in them a heavenly character; so that they, entering into heaven, and there growing for ever in this character and in the happiness belonging to it, satisfy the Divine purpose. This character is formed by resisting, overcoming, and putting away from the natural character whatever therein would tend to mar or pervert the life (the love and wisdom) received from its source; and so permit that life to be, when it is theirs, a life of love and wisdom that will always, in its own freedom, reject all evil and falsity. This is heavenly life. In kind and in degree it is infinitely diversified, all its varieties agreeing only in this,—that they love and choose good rather than evil.

But the work of forming this heavenly character begins on earth. Here, the free choice and the free act of every man determine his character and, therefore, his destiny. Earth, and all its laws, forces, and activities are exactly adapted to promote this

end; and all these laws and forces have come down to earth from God through the spiritual world, that they might carry this end into effect. It is carried into effect just so far as men use the freedom and the strength given them aright, and so build up a heavenly character. For this end is, that God may have a universe of beings to whom He may impart His own life, and with His life His happiness, in the greatest measure in which a created being can receive it.

It might be thought the Divine purpose was not carried into effect on earth, where evil mingles so abundantly with good, but only in heaven. It is not so. No one is heavenly in heaven, who did not begin to be heavenly on earth. For if one begins on earth to love good rather than evil, truth rather than falsity, the love of God rather than the love of self, the love of others rather than the love of the world for the sake of self, — he begins to be heavenly. Immeasurably small may be this little germ of a true life, and but little more than nothing the taste of heavenly happiness. But if he has begun to love God and his neighbor, and to hate selfishness and worldliness, and to desire deliverance from them, he has begun to be heavenly, and already has had some slight foretaste of the happiness of heaven; although the new thing is to him as the manna in the desert, and he asks, as the Israelites did, "What is it?"

Heavy the burdens which still oppress him, full of pain and weariness the conflicts he may pass through before his warfare is accomplished. But he has begun to be heavenly. In him the Divine purpose for which he came into being is accomplished. All that follows is a question of degree. Of the accomplishment of this Divine purpose there can be only a beginning, a constant and perpetual beginning, which will never have an end. In the other life the burdens may fall off, the conflicts cease, the happiness be secure and great; but it will be ever-growing, for, if it were not so, it would not satisfy the infinite love of God. And after the ages of eternity have passed by, and the wisdom and the happiness are wholly beyond our present power of conception, still it will be only a beginning.

Ages ago asceticism prevailed. In eastern countries it was formulated into the doctrine that the universe had been formed and was governed by two beings or principles — one good and one evil; the good being represented by the soul, and the evil by the body. When this doctrine was suppressed, or where it was not held, the body was still regarded by many as an incarnation of evil. All indulgence of it was wrong, and all mortification of it a virtue. Much of this has survived to our own times, and causes a modified and undefined belief in many minds that sensuous pleasure is at best a weak-

ness; and that, while a moderate enjoyment of it may be permitted, a contempt and rejection of it is better and safer for the soul.

Asceticism, even in its extreme, may be good for those who are unable to indulge at all in sensuous pleasure without running into excess, impurity, and sin. And now and always it may be well that sensuous tendencies, when very strong, should be checked by a belief that all sensuous enjoyment should be looked upon with disfavor, if these tendencies cannot otherwise be resisted. But, in itself considered, asceticism of every kind and degree is a mistake. The body and the senses, with their capacity of enjoyment, are given us to be enjoyed; and the virtues of temperance and purity give to their enjoyment endurance and a more exquisite relish. Wherever the more general elements of religion are believed, — as that there is a God whose commands are to be obeyed, — the rightful enjoyment of the senses may become itself religious, strengthening the recognition of the goodness of God, and the disposition to use in His service the added strength which well-adjusted recreation gives.

I have spoken of asceticism because this falsity is closely akin to, and may help to illustrate, another which prevails widely in these days, and is as much a mistake as asceticism. I refer to that falsity which

fears or undervalues natural science, and regards it as hostile to religious truth. This is an extreme, a total, mistake. When we say that natural truth cannot contradict spiritual truth, we only utter a truism which, in some form or other, is often expressed. It is but an application of this more general proposition that falsity, either natural or spiritual, must contradict truth of the other kind. That which is thought to be truth of either kind may not be true, for mistake in either direction is very easy. Thus, that which is called spiritual or religious truth may contradict natural science, because it is spiritual falsity and not spiritual truth; and so what seem to be truths of natural science may be only its mistakes, and then they must contradict whatever is actual spiritual truth.

Is there indeed any truth so certain that it has the right to sit in judgment on all propositions that claim to be true? There can be none such, but the primary truths of religion. But these are precisely what many natural scientists deny to be certain truths; and they are so far right, as that however certain a man may rationally be of the primary religious truths, he cannot have the right to be certain that either his apprehension or his expression of these truths is beyond the possibility of mistake. Neither system of truth can practically be made the criterion for truths of the other kind, for those

who are devoted to truths of that other kind must necessarily hold that it is *their* truths which have the right of final determination concerning all truths. Nevertheless, this criterion is one which men constantly, perhaps inevitably, apply. It is just this which makes so many religionists dread and hate what are called discoveries of science; and so many scientists deny and despise what are called essentials of religious truth; and so many habitually regard the rapid and inevitable growth of science as leading necessarily to the enfeeblement, if not the destruction, of religion. The fault or error is sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other, and often divided between them.

Tyndall and Huxley and Darwin, and other leading scientists, regard as certain some at least of the results of their scientific investigation, and, because they are certain, deny the religious dogmas which are incompatible with these results; and some of their followers, although they themselves do not, reject all religion because it seems to include or imply these dogmas.

In some cases, there is an entire blindness to all spiritual truths. Where this is, religion would have been denied at any rate; for while such persons think they reject religious truth because scientific truth opposes it, they would have been as sure to reject it if presented to their minds in any way.

They reject it simply because they are unwilling and therefore unable to accept it.

In other cases, natural truth has perhaps been discovered by means, and in a way, appropriate to it. If such persons acquire the habit of believing that whatever is true is discoverable or cognizable in the same way, or by the same process, and in the same temper of mind, and that whatever cannot be so discovered cannot be true, they must necessarily reject religious truth; for that is to be seen and known only by a process and in a temper appropriate to it. For this, reason must be consulted and obeyed; but it must be a reason that is not too proud to listen to revelation, and not so proud of its own strength or its own work, that it believes itself sufficient alone and of itself to lead to all good results.

Perhaps, however, the most common cause for the rejection of religious truth by scientists and philosophers is still another. They are educated as Christians in some form or other of what is called Christian Faith; or, if not so educated, they see these various forms all around them. In none of them do they see doctrines which they can reconcile with their reason or their knowledge. The indirect influence of revelation upon them induces them perhaps still to retain the belief of a God of some sort, and of future existence of some sort; and they hold these in a dim and uncertain way as a hope or a

possibility, and give what seem to them scientific or philosophic reasons for the belief or opinion they hold, utterly discarding revelation, not knowing that without the indirect effect of revelation no thought of the kind could have found its way to their minds.

Or perhaps, like Sir David Brewster, they adhere to the religion in which they were educated; holding it during active life rather loosely, not neglecting its observances, but not submitting it to investigation; and, when old age arrives and death draws near, clinging to it more closely.

Faraday — the great and good Faraday — could hold no opinion loosely or indefinitely; he could not but be religious, he could not but be scientific. But that he might hold both his religion and his science, he separated them perfectly. He placed himself very positively on the ground that they were not only distinct in their nature, but that they had no relation whatever which connected them together; and, perhaps, — if I draw a just inference from what I read in accounts of him that I have seen, — holding that both would be harmed and neither helped by any effort to bring them into harmony. Accordingly, as a scientific man, he held on his triumphant course; and, as a religious man, he left all his scientific knowledge and aspiration and thought behind, and adhered closely and earnestly to the peculiar views in which he had been brought up.

A better way than this is coming; I know not how soon or how slowly: but coming it certainly is. In the mean time, let our great scientists go on, and perform the work they are doing with so much energy and success. They are, above all, scientific men and philosophers; they must have knowledge and philosophy; they see much in the religions about them which could not be made to harmonize with their knowledge or their philosophy, and they are not led to go back to the records of revelation, and hold in their simplicity the truths they find. It is a pity when they go out of their way to sneer at religion, — which the most eminent among them do not, — for this hurts them and others. But let them go on in their course of inquiry. Let them learn all that they can about the material world, its laws, its forces, and its phenomena. This is a progress which will never end; and, when it is best for mankind, a new science will lay hold of their results. A science which is no less scientific because it is essentially and profoundly religious. A science which will have for its corner-stone the principle that there is not, and never was, and never can be, a truth of natural science which has not its correlative spiritual truth. A science which holds that the Infinite clothes itself in the finite; and which rejoices in all new light cast upon natural truth, because it may surely be reflected back upon spirit-

ual truth. Then will Science and Religion no longer be hostile or alienated; for each will regard the other as a friend and assistant, and both will offer their fruits to Him who made them both, and gives to them both all the life they have.

CHAPTER VIII.

OWNHOOD.

SWEDENBORG frequently uses the Latin word *proprium* as a substantive. What he means by it cannot be adequately and precisely expressed by any English word. The adjective *proprius* comes very near to the English word "own." It appears in many English words; as property, propriety, appropriate, and the like. In all of these we may see the idea of own-ness: thus, a man's property is what he owns. The word is also used to signify some quality which belongs to a thing and is its own, and without which it would be another thing: thus, it is the property of flame to heat and burn, and of ice to cool; a man behaves properly, or with propriety, when his conduct accords with all the circumstances which belong to him and are his own; and he appropriates any thing when he adds it to his property (*ad* and *proprio*). In translating Swedenborg's works, in which this word *proprium* frequently occurs, some have used "self-hood;" others have used or proposed "own-ness," "owndom," or "own-

hood." But it is found, on trial, that neither of these words exactly represents *proprium*, or suggests the ideas which it is intended to express by that word. Hence it has been practically concluded not to translate it at all, but to use the Latin word *proprium* as if it were an English word, leaving readers who do not know Latin to infer its meaning from the use of it; while they who do know Latin must remember that there is no word in any language which expresses more emphatically what we mean in English by the word "own." I agree that, in the translation of Swedenborg, it is best to use the word *proprium*; but, in such a work as this, I prefer to use generally the word "ownhood," explaining it as well as I can. Without using either this word or the word *proprium*, I have already referred to this doctrine, especially in Chapter II.; and must often refer to it, for it is implied in all the doctrines of the New-Church.

If it is not easy to translate the word *proprium*, it is equally difficult to exhibit the doctrine of *proprium* intelligibly. But so far as I am able to do this, it will be seen that it is novel and important, leading to consequences of great value.

Because all being is from one source, — God, who causes all things to be by an effluence from Himself, — we may hope to find the origin of this universal ownhood in God Himself, and in the nature of His

working. He gives being, and all the elements of being. He gives from love; from perfect love; and He gives wholly and unreservedly. He wishes that whatsoever is should be itself; but dependent upon Him, or connected with Him, so far as it must be by the continual gift of being to it, and the continual effort on his part that its being should be complete and perfect. Because every thing exists by a constant creative effluence from Him, and could not exist otherwise, it would be a part of Him, or continuous with Him, or Him in an imperfect way, if He did not give to it to be itself, or to be its own. The whole created universe as a whole, has this ownhood of itself. In the material universe, we discern some effects of this. Modern science has come to the conclusion that there is only so much matter in the world, its quantity being constant; and all the apparent deaths or births of matter being only changes in the form and appearance of matter, — no matter ever ceasing to be, or ever now beginning to be.

More recently, and yet not so certainly, science has concluded that there is but one force in the material universe; and that constant in quantity, but ever and indefinitely varying in action and appearance. The heat we feel or cause by our own efforts disappears; but this is only because it is changed into or becomes light or magnetism or

motion, or some other of the forms of force. So it is with every other of these forces. If either of them comes into manifestation, it is at the expense of some other; and when it ceases to act and appear as one force, it is because it has changed into or given birth to another. Indeed, science, in all its progress, seems to be advancing to the conclusion that the material universe is complete in itself, needing only the forces we see active in it to produce all its phenomena, and its whole succession of created beings and their circumstances. Hence it is that scientists, whose extent of knowledge gives them the widest view, see in matter "the promise and the potency" of all life. Their mistake, as we have already intimated, is that they do not see that matter has all this promise and potency, because God creates the material universe to be its own, itself; and is constantly creating, preserving, and animating it,—constantly giving this promise and potency. He continually gives it being; He continually imparts to it all force; He acts within the action of all its forces and all their effects, using them all as His instruments. And the reason of this is that the world of matter may be its own, itself,—and *as if* independent of Him,—while it is in fact instantly and constantly dependent upon Him for being, and for all its force, energy, or activity.

If we ascend to the animal world, we find the

same law or fact of ownhood, not more real, but more manifest. Every animal has some power over himself. He has will. Natural science finds it very difficult to say whether certain of the protozoa (or first forms of life) are vegetable or animal; insomuch that some scientists hold them to be neither the one nor the other, but something between, which may be developed into either. All, however, or nearly all, agree that the test is, Has the thing inquired about a will?—for if it can be seen to have a will, a choice, a power of self-determination, of any kind or any measure, it is an animal. There are sensitive plants in which motions may be produced by a touch; others in which moisture produces motion strangely like walking. Still others of which the appropriate organs close upon a fly or a morsel of flesh, and hold it firmly until all its juices are absorbed for the nourishment of the plant. Still it is only a plant, because all this is done unconsciously and involuntarily, and therefore do not entitle it to be regarded as an animal. So, too, the power which a grape vine and some other plants (perhaps all in some degree) have of sending out a root to seek distant water or rich food, or down the face of a rock to find earth, does not make the plant an animal. For an animal is a living organism which has a will; and this means that it has some power over itself, some choice whether to accept or to reject; to do

this or that, or to leave it undone; and exercises this power of choice consciously and intentionally. There is, indeed, among the indefinitely numerous theories advanced in these days, one which holds that animals are only automata, or machines, with no more of consciousness or will than trees have; but this theory meets with little favor, and very limited, if indeed any, reception.

Animals have been created successively; the lower or simpler in organization first, and then, step by step, the higher or more complex. Geology tells as much as this, perhaps, with certainty. But this new science, much less than a century old, is still in its infancy; although its discoveries are so numerous and interesting, and its conclusions so important, that it seems to have reached at once a kind of maturity. But its discoveries are as yet imperfect, and few of its most important conclusions are certain. If any one is so, it is that animals have been created through countless ages in successive gradation, and that at last man was created, an animal who crowned the series. Whether evolution played any part in this successive creation, I do not care to inquire; for, as I have already intimated, if it did it was but one of the methods or means by which God created. This succession stopped with man, and we have no evidence and no reason to believe that any new animal has been created since man existed.

Man is an animal; but he is also something more and higher than an animal. As an animal he has all the ownhood which an animal has. But an animal is only a natural being, and man, as an animal, is natural; but he is also a spiritual being. He is not spiritual because he possesses all the faculties which animals possess; for some animals possess each of these faculties in greater measure than man. If he possessed all, and in a greater measure than all animals taken together, this would be a superiority only in a *continuous* degree; it would be a superiority of measure and not of kind, and only such superiority as lifts the higher animals above the lower. He is superior to all other animals by a *discrete* degree. In addition to all that they have, he has that of which they have not a particle: he has a spiritual nature; and it lifts him above all other animals by a difference not of measure but of kind, and it makes him altogether other than them. By this spiritual nature, he stands in definite relations to the spiritual world; for in this spiritual nature he lives in the spiritual world even while he lives in this natural world.

He does not know this. So long as he lives in this world, his material body covers and clothes his spiritual body; and lives only because the spiritual body fills it and animates every part of it. The material body answers two purposes, or rather it causes

two entirely different effects. In the first place, as has been already said, it gives to the spiritual body an instrument by which it can recognize and make use of the material world. The material eye does not see; but the spiritual eye, or the eye of the spiritual body, through the material eye, sees the material world. When a man dies, his material eye remains for a time just what it was. It does not see, and never did see, and now the spiritual eye cannot see through it because it has gone away; for death is only the departure of the spiritual body from the material body, which then becomes dead, because all that gave it life has passed away from it. As it is with the eye, precisely so it is with the other senses and organs of sense.

The material body thus performs one of its functions in being an instrument through which the spiritual body may make use of a material world. But it accomplishes another purpose, or performs another function; and this is to serve as a veil or barrier or obstruction between the spiritual body and the spiritual world. So long as the spiritual body is clothed upon by the material body, its senses are (while we are in a normal condition) closed against all the objects in the spiritual world. How these two effects are in fact one, or if not one are closely connected, may perhaps be illustrated by a comparison. A man looks up at the sky in a cloudless night.

He sees a multitude of stars filling the whole concave. He points a good telescope at a dark space in the sky, and at once he sees a multitude of other stars, of which he could not see one before. But while the eye is fixed to the telescope, he cannot see that multitude of stars which he saw before. The instrument which enables him to see what he could not see without it, disables him from seeing what he could see without it. The material body is as the telescope. The comparison is rude, but it may at least help one to understand that, while a man lives on earth, the spiritual senses are (or the man whose senses they are, is) enabled, by the clothing of material organs, to hear, see, feel, and handle material things; while, because of these material organs, he cannot see, hear, feel, or handle the spiritual things in the midst of which he is living.

Death liberates the spiritual body from the material body; they go asunder. The material body loses all life and all sense; the spiritual body loses all recognition or perception of the material world, and gains at once full recognition and perception of the spiritual world. The man who has now no material body or organs ceases to live in this world, and begins to live consciously in that spiritual world in which he has always lived without knowing it.

If we regard God as infinite, and as the cause and source of all being, it must needs be impossible that

we should have the slightest idea of Him as He is in Himself, and prior to all action or manifestation. But it is not impossible that we should discern something of His action and His manifestation of Himself. It is certain that He has given to us the power of thinking that we discern this, and of drawing some inferences in respect to His nature and His methods of action. We have also what purport to be revelations from Him, helping us in this discernment and in these inferences. If, moreover, we believe that He has made us to be immortal, we must believe that through this immortality there must be progress in knowledge and wisdom and life, or else stagnation through eternity. If we believe that there will be progress in knowledge and wisdom, this must be in knowledge of Him, and in wisdom concerning Him. For if He be the cause and source of all being, it is plain that the wiser we are concerning Him and His action, the wiser we shall be as to all things, because all things are but the products of His action. Then if we believe in immortality after death, we cannot rationally avoid the belief that we begin our immortality here, and may begin here to prepare for the life which will be more fully developed hereafter.

From all this it would seem to follow that, while the finite intellect cannot either here or there form an idea of the infinite as it is in itself, it may begin

here to form an idea of Him in His action and manifestation; which idea, however imperfect in its beginning, will be enlarged and developed indefinitely. To say that our knowledge of Him may hereafter become, in comparison with our knowledge of Him while here, far more than the full-grown oak is in comparison with the acorn, is to suggest but a slight similitude. But when we remember the probable relation of this life to the next, and the probable purpose of our life here, we may believe that a knowledge of Him which is possible here may be as an acorn, a living seed, in which there exists potentially, and in its beginning, the germ of that which will come hereafter.

If any thing is certain concerning the Divine action, it is that it is gradual,—each step in advance of that behind, and each leading to a step still farther in advance. We may be disposed to see in this both the proof and the effect of the law that progress is, on the whole, eternal. However we may account for it, and however we may sometimes doubt it, because this progress advances in waves which go forward and then fall back, and in the retreating moment it seems as if progress itself were stayed,—yet, if we look over a series of sufficient extent, we cannot but be sure that the movement is, on the whole, forward. We may form two conclusions. One is, that, when we look at the past history and

the present condition of human thought, we may be sure that the best idea we can form, or the sum of the knowledge we can acquire, concerning the relations of God with man must be imperfect to the last degree, and so slight as to be only more than nothing. The other conclusion is, that this knowledge may be accurate as far as it goes, and, however small in comparison with what the far future may bring forth, it may be of vast magnitude and importance in comparison with the nothingness of ignorance. It may, though small as the grain of mustard seed, have within it the capacity of perpetual growth and of indefinite multiplication by the propagation of truth from truth. This progress may be slow. We may begin from nothing; and in its early stages be only more than nothing. But progress must be constant and continual, and never end; and in all this progress man must have a share, *as of his own work.*

The conclusion from all that has been said, is, that man was created what he is, to the end that he may advance in wisdom, goodness, and happiness for ever, by his own efforts. But it is impossible to believe this without some idea of, some belief in, ownhood. For it all implies that whatever lives and advances by voluntary efforts must make these efforts as his own, and they must be most truly his own.

This doctrine of a man's ownhood of his life and being meets Pantheism; and it is the only doctrine which reconciles the truth that God is all in all, with the other truth that He is other than and distinct from the universe. True it certainly is, that God is all in all; and so far as this constitutes or implies Pantheism, that also is true. But it is not true that the All of creation is the All of God. He exists in His creation, and He exists also in Himself—in His Divine ownhood, from which proceeds creation. To this creation He gives also all the ownhood it can receive. He gives it to be itself, and therefore other than Him: as entirely other than Him as if He were not its constant and continual creator. By virtue of its ownhood, of its own being,—while it exists only from Him, and He is in it, and constitutes all of it,—He is other than it, and it is other than Him.

I have already referred to Pantheism, or the theory that the universe is God, and that God is the universe; and have said that what makes it a fatal falsity is its denial of, and its antagonism to, the idea of a personal God. The one thing which gives to Pantheism its attractiveness is its satisfying, or at least appeasing, the desire for a God, which, after revelation has once given the thought of God, is never wholly lost from the human mind and heart,—while it relieves the understanding from the effort to comprehend an Infinite person.

This effort the simple-minded do not make. From the earliest ages to the present day, the great body of religious persons believed simply in a Divine man. They did not, and do not, trouble themselves to define this idea. They hold it unconsciously. If they were told that they believed only in a Divine man, they would deem it an accusation which they would reject, perhaps indignantly. "No," they would say, "we believe in a God." They do so; but all the while their God is a Divine man. He is a man, in the first place, that they may be able to think of him at all; and then they make him Divine in just such a way, and to such an extent, as they can. The old mythologies, and the religions of many heathen nations at this day, attest this. Pious Catholics cling to the worship of the Virgin Mary and of the saints, because in them they have persons to believe in, and think of, and worship.

When Pantheism relieves the understanding from the effort to comprehend an Infinite person, it does this at the cost of all that is of the essence of religion. There can be no reverence of, no obedience to, no love for, any thing which is not a person. Fetishism, which worships stocks and stones, and idolatry, may seem to worship that which is not a person; but it is worship only so far as the imagination invests the thing with the attributes of personality, or sup-

poses it to represent a Divine person. A Pantheist believes all this a weakness from which he has escaped. He mistakes: it is a modicum of strength which he has lost. If he has succeeded in silencing or paralyzing the demand for a God whom he can love and worship, he has put away nearly all which lifts him above animal life. If he recognizes this need, and has a theory by which he worships some abstraction — as Comte and others have done or tried to do — he commits a folly which is a mere emptiness in his own mind, and which thinking people see to be an empty folly, and of which the only value is the proof it offers that man must have a God, or something which he can call a God.

How then are thinkers to deal with the problem of an Infinite person? They must resort to that anthropomorphism of which we have already spoken, and which is at once reasonable and inevitable; and is wise, so far as it lifts man up to God, and avoids degrading God to man.

An important effect of the doctrine of ownhood of human life is the perfect answer that it gives to the doctrine of final absorption into Deity. This last falsity has always prevailed very widely. Among eastern nations, and especially in Buddhism, although not in that faith alone, it was systematized and avowed. There has been, and still is, much question whether even there this absorption was carried to

the extent of an entire annihilation of individuality. It is, however, certain that in the minds of its earlier and most authoritative teachers it approached very near to, if it did not reach, this extreme; while it is also certain that it stops far short of this in the views held now by the great body of Buddhists. In Christianity it has never taken the form of a positive doctrine; but it lingers, concealed perhaps and latent, in many of the most religious and reflective minds, and not unfrequently exhibits itself in poetry and speculative writing. For example, in Wordsworth's beautiful lines, if he does not mean he at least suggests this thought, where he speaks of life and death, and compares human lives to

Streams whose murmur fills this hollow vale;
Whether their course be turbulent or smooth,
Their waters clear or sullied, all are lost
Within the bosom of yon crystal lake,
And end their journey in the same repose.

It is easy to see how thoughtful persons end, if not in this belief, at least in a strong tendency in that direction. They see that there must be a God; that He must be in some sense alone, and All in All; and that all being flows forth from Him, and through its ascending steps culminates in man. Then, what more rational hope for the next step, than that this life, going forth from God, returns to Him in the final consummation of its progress?

To all this the doctrine of ownhood has an answer. God's love, because it is infinite, cannot but give to man the infinite and endless blessing of ownhood of his life. By this is made possible that gift of reciprocation, which, if it were only understood, would vivify every human heart with the wondering gratitude that swells the heart of Heaven. If man could receive only, he could return nothing. He would have nothing of his own to give back to God, who gives him every thing. But because all that is given him is given to him as his own, he can give this back. The life which comes from God to man is none the less God's life when it is in man. When man gives back this life to God, it is none the less man's life. He does give this life back to God when the love God gives to man returns to God as man's love for Him. Man returns God's wisdom to Him, when he receives the truths God gives to him, and uses the rationality also given, to learn from those truths how to ascribe to Him all the thought and understanding he possesses, and all the wisdom that came forth from God to fill his mind with light, and all that constitutes his life and being; and thus gives to God the glory due unto Him. And this is what is meant by reciprocation. God gives to man life and love and wisdom, and man gives it all back to God, as his own free gift of that which is his own.

God always works through His instruments. He does all of His work that can be so done, by and through His free and rational instruments; for thus He blesses them. And when we think of what man may grow into, and may now be in the higher stages of his being, what limits shall we set to this possibility? God does this, because His own infinite happiness springs from the indulgence of His love and the exercise of His wisdom in His own infinite working, and in His giving of happiness; and He desires to impart as much of the same happiness to those whom He has created that He may bless them, as it is possible for them to receive, and therefore for Him to give. He does not work through them as merely passive channels, for then His end would not be attained. He creates them to be active and reacting instruments; to be men, who, in their own freedom, and in their own strength, which is given to them to be their own, do His work as their own work. In this they work with Him. Absorption into Deity is not possible, nor is a merely passive reception; but reaction and reciprocation are possible; and, thanks to His infinite goodness, conjunction with Him is therefore possible! Yes, conjunction of man, the finite creature, with God, the infinite Creator!

In the prevailing alienation from God, in our habitual looking to Him as infinitely removed from us, and as inaccessible to d finite thought, and in-

deed to be thought of, if at all, only as a vast and hidden power, — it must be difficult to apprehend a truth which tells us that He is very near, and always seeking to come nearer. But in the light of this truth we may look upon Him as ever acting in His work of creation and preservation, and upon ourselves as working with Him: actually working with the Infinite. Far forward into an indefinite future must we extend our look, if we would see ourselves in any great measure permitting Him to accomplish the purpose for which He creates us, and has ever in view in all His dealings with us. For that purpose is that we should be, and know ourselves to be, His children; to whom He commits a share of His Divine work, that we may have a share in His Divine happiness.

But perhaps the most valuable fruit of this doctrine of the ownhood of human life is the solution of the problem presented by the mingling of order and disorder, of good and of evil, in all things that we know; in a word, that old problem, — the origin of evil, — to which we have more than once alluded, and of which we would again speak in connection with this doctrine of ownhood. Old as this problem is, and attacked by the strongest thinkers in all ages, there have been devised only three solutions: One is, that there is a power of evil in the universe, equal or nearly equal to God, and always contend-

ing with Him. Another — which is akin to the first, and, as sometimes presented, appears to be almost the same — is, that the love and power of God are limited and imperfect. The third finds the origin of evil in the freedom of man and the abuse of that freedom. It is the last which the New-Church adopts, and to which, in its doctrine of the ownhood of human life, it gives a new explanation.

This doctrine explains both how and why we have freedom, because that springs necessarily from a true ownhood of one's life. Without freedom, we should be only a machine operated by a force which we could not resist. Nor should we have even the thought or desire of resisting it, or the knowledge that it was a force controlling us; for without freedom, we could not have any idea of freedom, nor know what freedom is. Without freedom, we could not act as of ourselves, for we should be only instruments used by another, and all our acts would be the acts of him who made use of us. Because we have freedom, and this freedom is the gift of God, we stand in a relation to Him of perfect dependence, and yet are as entirely ourselves as if we were perfectly independent.

This doctrine explains what freedom is. It is the power of choosing for ourselves what we shall do, and what we shall be. There is natural freedom, and there is spiritual freedom. Natural freedom

relates to this world, and to external life and conduct. Spiritual freedom relates to the spirit and the things of the spirit; to our true character; to our spiritual life in this world and in the other. Our natural freedom is much and often impaired and controlled, because we have natural freedom for the sake of our spiritual freedom; and our natural freedom is always impaired and controlled as and so far as the interests of our spiritual freedom require, but never any farther. It is impaired, suspended, and controlled in such wise as will best lead us, if we can be led, to make a good use of our spiritual freedom. That is not lessened or controlled except in the rare cases in which it is permitted that evil influences should gain possession of us; and in those cases our manhood and selfhood are suspended.

It is true that there is a sense in which it may be said that our spiritual freedom is otherwise, for a time, suspended. Divine Providence has permitted calamity or fear to oppress us, or other modes of discipline to wake us for a time to a knowledge of ourselves. We see our wrong-doings and our sins; we form earnest resolutions to abstain from them altogether. This is an excellent thing. It is just that for which these visitations are permitted. But we are not in a state of entire spiritual freedom, when, under such influences, we form such resolutions. They do not yet, therefore, as

we have already said, enter into our character. For that we must wait until the storm has gone by, and we have returned into our normal condition. Then our freedom becomes again entire; and in that freedom we choose whether the repentance and reform which we had resolved upon shall be infixed into our character by our conduct. That we might form such purposes, those controlling influences were permitted; that these purposes may be carried into effect, those controlling influences have been taken away, and our freedom restored to us. For certain it is, that only what we choose in freedom, and do because we have so chosen it, becomes a part of our character and of ourselves for ever. If these resolutions of reform are sincere and earnest, they are rooted into the character, and will bear their fruits in the other life, if Divine Providence abridges this life, and so prevents them from manifesting their effects here. But in any given case, whether these purposes be so sincere and earnest, can be known only to Him who searches the heart.

There could not be manhood, and all the possibilities of a manhood growing through eternity, without ownhood of ourselves. And this implies and causes necessarily self, as the basis of character. Man, because he is free, asks of himself what he shall do and what he should be. He asks this of himself; for, if there were any one who could answer

this question and decide it for him, he would not be free. He must ask this question of himself, and his answer must satisfy himself, or he cannot be happy; for he would be in a state of bondage, and that is incompatible with true happiness. He must look to himself and regard himself, or he cannot be what a man should be.

Self-love is an inevitable necessity. It belongs to man as man, and cannot be escaped from. The severest ascetic, who rejoices in the belief that he had put self-love away, has only clothed it with a disguise which cheats himself as well as others. But while it is inevitable that self-love should be positive and active in every man, it is not inevitable, and it is very far from necessary, that it should be sovereign within him. Whether it shall be so or not is precisely the question which determines his character and his destiny. As soon as he begins to live and to be conscious of life, he begins to seek indulgence for himself and for his love of himself. But he is not left long before some love of others is suggested to him and infused into him. From that moment, the contest begins between the love of self and the love of others; and it never ends until it is determined which of these two is sovereign over the other. Neither of the two can be wholly extirpated. The question is, both being there, Which shall exist and act for the sake of the other? All

the aid that Infinite love and wisdom and power can give to man, to help him to give the victory to the right over the wrong, is surely and ever given to him. But there stands his ownhood of himself. Nothing can be given to him which he does not accept. In the beginning, and at the foundation of his character by birth and nature, the love of self stands first; it remains supreme, dominating the character and determining the destiny, unless the man accepts the aid that is given him, and, by the rightful use of means and powers given to this end, subjects this essence and origin of all evil—self-love—to that love of others, which is the essence and origin of all good. The question then is, Which is for the sake of the other? If self-love be supreme, the man loves himself for the sake of himself, and loves his neighbors for the sake of himself, or only as instruments for his purposes, and as contributors in some way or other to his pleasure and enjoyment. In this way, or on this ground, he may love them ardently, and persuade himself, and perhaps others, that love for others is supreme within him; but all the while it is only a servant, and perhaps a slave. But if his love for others becomes indeed supreme, then he loves himself for the sake of others. He seeks for the means of strength, that he may use it for others. He enjoys—perhaps no one more—all that sustains life and gives to it innocent pleasure;

but the foundation of all his enjoyment is that it supports and freshens and invigorates him for usefulness, and, in usefulness, happiness.

From such a love of others, as from its root, grows the love of God. For, by the unselfish love for others, man is prepared to receive this love into his heart. It is sent to him from God, as the last, best, gift, which will lead him to the love of God, and will help to accomplish the purpose of God, in making him capable of conjunction with Him and of receiving from Him the happiness which it is the happiness of God to give.

Self-love is not selfishness unless it be supreme,—making self the centre to which all things are referred. It is not selfishness when it seeks to be the servant of that love of others which uses it as its instrument. May we not here, also, look to God, the exemplar of man, his child, for instruction? We cannot err in seeing in Him a self which loves to give itself away and desires that all it gives should return to it in prayer and worship and love, only because this enables it to give itself more fully and more entirely. That He may give Himself entirely to His children, He gives to them an ownhood of their lives. Through this ownhood and the freedom which belongs to it, they may, with His un-failing help, build themselves more and more into His image and likeness, and therefore more and

more into the capability of receiving His life as their own.

For all this, freedom is perfectly indispensable. Without it, man would not be man. When Huxley said, a few years ago, that he saw no good in freedom with its responsibilities, and he should be glad to be wound up periodically, like a clock, thereafter to go on as he was made to go,—this was a thoughtless remark; for no man could see more clearly that, if his wish were gratified, he would be a clock, and not a man. Freedom is indeed essential to manhood and to all idea of manhood. When disease or any cause takes it wholly from a man, he is separated from his fellows, and cared for as one who can no longer be with them. We say such a person is no longer himself, and this phrase tells the whole truth; without rational freedom and the power of self-determination, a man is not himself.

But freedom, to be real and true, must be capable of abuse. It is the power of choosing between good and evil; and no man can *choose* good unless he can *choose* evil. The choice of evil brings sin, with all its train of consequences. The world, outside of man,—and this includes his body, for the spirit is the man,—is perfectly adjusted to his spiritual needs, and is therefore in correspondence with his spiritual condition. Hence the disorder and dis-

turbance in this external world are the effect and the symbol of the disorder in the internal world, or in the spiritual condition of mankind.

In saying that freedom, if real, must be liable to abuse, we touch again upon the great difficulty in accounting for the existence of evil. It is impossible not to believe that we are free. No sane man can doubt this any more than he can doubt his life. Freedom is as certain as life, for it is a part of life. Nor is it difficult to appreciate the good of freedom, or its indispensableness to the highest human worth or happiness. But the question remains, Why could we not have been so constructed that we might have freedom and all its beneficial results, without this liability to abuse? If we believe in heaven, do we not believe that man is free there, and yet sinless and happy?

The answer is, that only by the rightful use of a freedom liable to abuse, could we build up such a character that hereafter, when this character was fully developed, we might be free, and yet sheltered from the danger of sin.

The truth of this answer is not obvious. We shall come nearer to seeing it, as we see more clearly the worth and the essentials of a true manhood. The great difficulty in believing that a God of love, of wisdom, and of power, all infinite, should have made us and the world which is our home so

full of that which we justly call evil, may be lessened by remembering how little of His work we see, and how very little of that little we understand. Many thousand years ago, men roved upon this earth in the lowest condition possible for human beings. We have, through gradual advances, reached a position which, as we look back from it upon the far-retreating past, seems to us a commanding position; which justifies us in making our reason the measure of all things, and in believing what we cannot understand to be unintelligible or non-existent. "When man has looked about him as far as he can, he concludes there is no more to be seen; when he is at the end of his line, he is at the bottom of the ocean; when he has shot his best, he is sure that no one ever did or ever can shoot better or beyond it; his own reason he holds to be the certain measure of truth, and his own knowledge, of what is possible."*

This is utter foolishness; but it is a universal foolishness from which none escape entirely. Nor can we escape it, except by a thankful reception of such truths as are within our reach, and a patient and humble hope that what we now see dimly we may grow into the ability of seeing clearly. We see here and now but a small part of the beginning of a work that is to have no end. Surely,

* Sir William Temple.

we cannot be mistaken in holding as certain that whatever evil exists, exists by God's permission; that it is permitted by Him only for the sake of good; and that His omnipotence is constantly engaged in evolving good out of all evil. But how? This may indeed be a secret of the Infinite; and the wisest may grow for ever wiser as they discern more and more of that wisdom, which they can never contemplate or comprehend in its wholeness. Little is the light now given us, because, as we now are, more would be unfit for us and harmful; but that little may guide us to the conclusion that He cannot have created any of His children for a doom which would be worse than non-existence,—for such a doom could never be the gift of perfect love.

The presence in this world of so much that is not good has always seemed, and now to many minds seems, to justify a doubt as to the existence of God; or, if He exists, then as to His goodness or wisdom or power. True it is, that we cannot believe in Him and in His infinite attributes, unless we believe that in some way He is able to deduce good from all evil. That we are unable to see clearly and always how He does this, is no argument against this belief, except with those who think that the finite can fathom the counsels of the Infinite, and who forget that we are but at the beginning of being, and that our best wisdom is but as mere foolishness in the

sight of perfect wisdom. One reason why we are permitted to begin our being in a world like this is suggested by the fact that this is but the beginning. It may well be that the highest good may, in the end, or in an eternity which will not end, require eternal progress, and that this progress should begin from the bottom — from the last and lowest state in which human beings may live. And this thought helps to explain the fact which science has abundantly proved, that, prior to any civilization, men lived on earth for myriads of years in a condition removed only one step, and that not a long one, from the condition of the beasts around them.

Another view of this subject we may derive from the consideration, that what is true of individuals must be in some measure true of the whole which, taken together, they compose. And who that has made any progress in spiritual improvement can doubt that the seeming calamities which have befallen him, and have often disappointed his dearest wishes, have been the means by which he has gone forward, step by step? Even so, we may say, humbly and reverently, it may have been with our sins. We have been permitted to fall, that we might know, as otherwise we could not and would not know, what depths of iniquity were hidden in our hearts. Happy is he who is able to discern and to resist the first thoughts and emotions of evil, when they first

disclose themselves to the mind! But only One, the Sinless, could do this always and perfectly. We must strive for this; and, when we fail, we may still hope that a penitence as profound as the sin calls for, may wipe the sin away, and out of its own sorrow beget such a hatred of that sin as shall make us ever thereafter safe against its influence. Happy then are we, if that repentance shall convert our love of sin into hatred of it; happy are we, if we are so changed by yielding to influences from above, that we shall hereafter be sure to hate that which otherwise we might have always loved!

For a more general view of this question we must again advert to our ownhood of ourselves. Because it has been given us, and as the end for which it is given us, we may build up our own character, — always under the leading of Providence, always with the constant help, without which we cannot take a single step; but with this leading and this constant help, we may build up our character even from the beginning. This Divine leading may take us through paths which are painful, and seem to be devious. But one of the great purposes for which the dark mysteries of life are permitted to close in upon us, may well be to strengthen our casting away of the self we know to be so stained, and our acceptance of the will of God; and to invigorate our faith in a wisdom that cannot err, and our trust in a goodness

that cannot fail. And when we remember what Heaven is, and that the happiness of all who are there consists in a clear perception of Him and of His working, and in perfect love for and perfect trust in Him who gives them all their happiness, and in entire surrender of self to Him,— what price can we think too large to pay for whatever shall advance us on the way to this consummation!

CHAPTER IX.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE basis of the philosophy which we are taught by Swedenborg, is, that all things exist from God, and that He creates them by an effluence from Himself. The whole universe is not at an equal distance from God, but some things are nearer to and other things farther from Him. Thus, spirit is nearer to Him than matter; and, in the world of spirit and in the world of matter, there are different degrees of nearness to Him or of distance. This nearness or distance is not of place, but of state or condition, and is strictly a difference of degree; and of these degrees some are continuous degrees, or degrees of breadth on the same plane, and some are discrete degrees, or degrees of height.

One of the laws in conformity to which God creates is, that He creates through, or by means of, these discrete degrees,—higher things being instruments by means of which He creates lower things; each several higher thing being an instrument by means of which each several lower thing is cre-

ated. Thus, all spirit is higher than matter; and it is through spirit that matter is made to assume form. Take for example the body: if life leaves the impregnated ovum in the mother, it dies, and there is the end of it. If it lives, the life that is in it is a spiritual life; and it gathers, first from the mother, and afterwards from suitable objects brought within its reach, the materials out of which it forms the body. We know that the body grows from the first living germ to the full maturity of the adult man. So does the spirit grow from the first germ of spiritual life to its adult condition. And as the spirit grows, the material body, which is to be its clothing for a while, is formed by or through the spirit. For it is always the spirit which is formative or causative, and the material which is formed or is the effect.

What is thus true of the spirit and the body is true of the whole spiritual world, — which world includes our own spirit and all that belongs to it, — and of the whole material world. It is through that spiritual world as a whole, that the material world as a whole is created. This is true not only in the past but in the present, and continually; not only generally, but specifically: all substances and forces, and all the forms of substance, and all the activities of force, having their causes in the spiritual world. Each one of all these things is first spiritual, and

then, by the creative energy passing down through it, becomes material. And this is true also of all the changes in all things, whether substance or force. These changes are continual, for it may now be considered as ascertained that all things are in perpetual motion or action, external and internal; and all this motion or action is first spiritual, and then material.

Let us return again to the example first selected, of the soul and the body. As the soul forms the body, or through the soul the body is formed, so the soul forms the body to be its representative and instrument. It can be its instrument, because it is its representative; that is, because it is so exactly adapted to it that the soul animates every part, and finds in the body clothing for all of itself; and is able to make use of every part of the body to do the act or perform the function which each portion of the soul asks of that part of the body which clothes it. In one word, the material body corresponds to the soul.

We know very well what resemblance is; and almost — not perhaps quite as well — what analogy is. But correspondence is neither resemblance nor analogy. It bears a certain likeness to them, and yet is different from them. In certain instances of correspondence, there is between the things that correspond much resemblance; in others much

analogy, and in yet others neither resemblance nor analogy. Correspondence is a different relation between things; and it is difficult to present this new idea intelligibly. The word is old; but it is now used in a new sense to express a relation, not hitherto known, between spiritual things and natural things. Perhaps this new meaning of the word can only be learned gradually, as we understand in special instances the relation which it seeks to express. It might suffice as a provisional definition of correspondence, to say that it is the relation between a higher and causative thing, and the lower thing which is caused by or through the higher, and which represents the higher.

Perhaps this relation of correspondence may be illustrated by the relation between the human countenance and the affections and thoughts. Whatever they are, that becomes. Between what is felt and thought, and the expression of the face, there is no resemblance or analogy; but there is correspondence. Let a man feel some strong affection, or have a new and interesting thought, and a change takes place at once in the muscles of the face and in the brightness or sadness of the eye, which is perfectly inexplicable on mechanical grounds, but is the effect of *internals* operating upon *externals*. It is a correspondence; and this correspondence is perfect, if hypocrisy does not interfere, and if habitual repression and conceal-

ment have not impaired the response of the face to the mind and heart.

It has been said that the material world, as a whole, corresponds with the spiritual world. But there is also in each of these worlds a correspondence. For all the persons in the spiritual world think and feel, and all their thoughts and affections, taken together, constitute their internal spiritual world; but they have an outside world to live in just as men have here, and all the things thereof, taken together, constitute their external spiritual world. Their external spiritual world is formed through or by their internal spiritual world, not generally, but specifically; that is, all the several things, whether substances or forces of their external world, are formed through or by the several things — each by each — of their thoughts or affections.

So it is also, but with a difference, in this material world. Men, while they live here, have a material world, and a home and all things of it, including all animals below men, for their instruments. They have also thoughts and affections, which are of their spirits; and the things which are material are formed through and by the things of their spirits.

All things below, which are created by or through things above, correspond to them. Hence, the general correspondence between this lower world and the spiritual world, and also the correspondence be-

tween thoughts and affections, and external things, which is true of that world and of this world; specifically true of that world, where the attraction of affinity classifies all perfectly, bringing together those of like kind, and permitting the external world about them to represent, specifically, their internal world or their thoughts and affections. Here men of all kinds are mingled for the uses of this world, and the external world corresponds only generally to the world of human thought and affection; being, as it were, its common resultant.

It is indeed by means of this correspondence that creation is effected. The creative energy, flowing into one degree of existence, flows through it and creates the degree below by this law of correspondence; which may be regarded as not only a law and a fact, but also as a force, animated, like all forces, by the only primal and original force. This relation exists from the summit to the bottom, everywhere, through the whole range of existence. It is by means of it that all created things are connected together into one whole, and that this whole creation is connected with its Creator. Every thing which is caused corresponds to the higher causative thing through which it is caused; and this caused thing may become in its turn a causative thing or instrument through which a lower thing is caused, which again corresponds to its cause. And, finally,

the whole creation corresponds to, expresses, and represents its Creator. Thus, correspondence is universal and all-pervading.

I have used the words cause, causative, and causation in a somewhat unusual sense. There are two kinds or modes of causation; a higher and a lower. One of these operates only between different planes or discrete degrees of being, as between spirit and matter; this is the higher. The other operates between things on the same plane of being; this is the lower. When we strike a billiard ball with another and cause it to move, when we apply flame to gunpowder and cause it to explode, when a sculptor brings out a statue from a block of marble,—these are instances of causation of the lower kind. But this is the only kind which is recognized among men. If ever they think of a spiritual cause producing a new creation, they think of it only as they would think of making some new form by the proper use of suitable instruments and substances. The idea of causation in its higher sense has not existed among men, and therefore no word has been required or used to express it. “Cause” is the only word I have, and I must use it in both senses. But I shall not be understood when I use it, if it is not remembered that I am speaking of causation as that is operative between different planes of being; of causation by correspondence. Of course I cannot

be understood by those who are unable to believe that there are different planes of being.

Some of these correspondences have always been seen, and they show themselves in all languages. A man is said to be warm or cold in his feelings or affections: burning with passion, or frozen in indifference. His thoughts are said to be luminous and bright, or dark and cloudy. Language is indeed founded upon correspondence; for leading philologists agree, that words which have a moral meaning are generally formed from those which have primarily a physical meaning; and some of our words still retain both meanings, as rule, right, and the like. Poetry discovers a multitude of correspondences; some nearer, some more remote. Indeed, the very highest poetry has always done its best and greatest work in making the splendor, the sublimity, and the beauty of the external world significant, and giving them a voice. Upon the walls of the world that is our home are hung pictures of the life within; they are veiled to our eyes, and poetry takes the veil away. When these things are thought about, and there is an attempt to analyze and account for them, they are said to be the products of imagination. This is true, but it is not true in the sense in which it is commonly said; for in their utter ignorance of the true function of the imagination, men mean by this phrase only that these things have no

real existence, no actual truth. There can be no greater error. It is as much the function of imagination to supply reason with inexhaustible materials for its proper work, as it is for reason to instruct and guide imagination, that it may not wander into the paths of fantasy.

Already is it seen by some of the most eminent thinkers of the day, that imagination has always worked with reason in the progress of the profoundest sciences. Astronomy, and all the branches of physics, owe to its assistance their greatest advances; and distinguished mathematicians have said that even mathematics, the stern rebuker of fantasy, would never have reached its present fruitfulness and power had it not profited by the aid of imagination.

It is difficult to speak of what must be the effects of this doctrine, now that there is no knowledge and no recognition of it even among advanced scientists. And it cannot but seem fanciful, and offensively so, to those who habitually confine their thoughts to material things; or, if they investigate mind, so utterly invert the truth as to regard mind as the product of matter; or, if they avoid this falsity, regard mind as not only perfectly distinct from matter, but as having no definite relation to it. While mind and matter are thus regarded as perfectly separated from each other, without relation or connection, neither

can be understood. Nor is there any relation or connection discoverable between them, except that of correspondence. When this is distinctly seen, the whole material world will have its significance and its voice. The realms of Nature will speak to man, for whom they are created, and their utterance will reveal truths concerning things above them. The sciences of mind and matter, no longer independent, and still less hostile, will work together while each does its own work. Many a mystery in the world of mind will be solved by light rising up to it from new discoveries in the fields of matter. Many a mystery in the world of matter will be illuminated by light falling down upon it from the world of mind.

It will be seen that all there is in the spirit of man refers itself to what is either of the will, or of the understanding, — to feelings and affections, or to thoughts; to the activities of affection or to those of thought. So it will be seen that all there is in the world of matter refers itself in its correspondence and significance to one or the other of these two great departments, — will and intellect, — which together constitute spiritual life. Innumerable and indefinitely diversified are the particulars which compose the worlds of mind and of matter. And the correspondence between the worlds is not general only, but specific; running through all these

particulars and connecting them together. It is not more true that every thing which exists was caused, or had a cause, than it is that every thing which is caused corresponds to its cause. Hence it is that this world is so perfectly adjusted to our needs. We live here only to prepare for another life; and it is the perfect correspondence between those two worlds which makes the lower world perfectly adapted to be a world of preparation for the higher. The things of Nature will be made to give their moral lesson, and will be seen to have their spiritual import. A little of this is sometimes attempted, and successfully, even now, and especially by the highest poetry; but this is very little, very near to nothingness, in comparison with what may be, and therefore will be known in coming ages, when the human mind is opened to the light.

But a few correspondences have been referred to. It would be easy to go on indefinitely, and apply the same principles to other things. Indeed, it is difficult to refrain from the attempt to do so. But to those who refuse to rise above sensuous thought, and whose whole habit and condition of mind tend to resist the idea that the universe, including mind and matter, is an organic one, all its infinitely varied parts being linked together in indissoluble unity, what I have already said must

needs seem to be an idle tale, a dream of unbridled fantasy; and nothing could be added that would change its aspect. To those who have learned or are willing to learn this central truth, it is possible that it might receive some illustration from farther instances of this correspondence. It seems, however, that the few which the scope of this work permits me to attempt can be given to better purpose, if at all, when I treat of the word of God. For then I shall endeavor to show that the sanctity and power and instructiveness of the word rest, in great measure, upon correspondence. By its means, inspiration from on high was able to bring that word which, in the heavens, is the inexhaustible source of the wisdom of the wisest there, down even to the dwellers upon earth, with all its transcendent truth; but covered with a veil which the science of correspondence makes, or hereafter will make, transparent.

CHAPTER X.

THE HUMAN FORM.

FORM is not the same thing as shape. Every thing has a form, and only some things have shape. The correlative to form is essence. Whatever exists has both. Sensuous philosophers—Locke for example—deny and, as they think, disprove essence; and to sensuous thought there is neither form nor essence. But every thing which exists has that which makes it to be just what it is: and that is its essence. In despite of philosophy, common sense expressing itself in common language asserts an essence; for it says of this or that quality or attribute, that it is essential to this or that thing: and all that is essential to its being is of its essence. If its essence determines *what* a thing is, it is almost a definition of form to say it is that which determines *how* a thing is. Bacon, in his seventeenth aphorism, says: “Eadem res est forma calidi vel forma luminis, et lex calidi aut lex luminis;”—“The same thing is the form of heat or the form of light, and the law of heat or the law of light.” As the essence of

every thing determines *what* it is, and the form of it determines *how* it is, or what it shall do or act or cause, — so the form of any thing is its law.

Swedenborg uses in relation to this matter two Latin words which it has been found impossible to translate adequately; and, for the most part, they are left untranslated in our English translations of his works: these words are “*esse*” (literally, to be) and “*existere*” (literally, to exist). *Existere* is derived from two other Latin words, and means “to stand forth;” and it may help us to approach the meaning of this distinction, if we understand that the *esse* of any thing is that which it is in itself, while its *existere* is that which it is as it “stands forth,” and makes itself manifest and active in its functions. This use of these two Latin words is not peculiar to Swedenborg. Spinoza makes frequent use of them in just the same sense; and I think I have met it in other writers who use scholastic Latin, but I am not sure that I remember accurately. In this work, I use “essence” and “form” as very nearly, though not quite, the equivalents of *esse* and *existere*.

In this sense, it is obvious that every thing must have an essence and a form; for, if it had no essence, it would not have that which makes it to be what it is, or to be at all, and could not have any form. And, if it had an essence and not a form, it would

have no existence; for it would not have that by which it could exist and act, or stand forth in manifested and active being. But it is not so with shape; for this some things have, and other things have not. The air we breathe, the ethers from which come light, electricity, and magnetism, have no shape, but they have form. Our affections and thoughts, which are most real things, are without shape, but they have form. Shape is only an external of form, which is moulded by the form, and expresses the form to the senses of sight and touch. Where shape exists, the form is clothed by it, and in it puts on dimensions, and is cognizable by the senses and by sensuous thought. The shape does in some sort reveal and manifest the form, as the form manifests the essence. The form is not apprehensible by sensuous thought, but only by rational thought. And, in these days, rational thought for the most part submits itself to sensuous thought, and consents to call those of its intuitions or conclusions which sensuous thought cannot accept, unrealities.

Sometimes the body is called the form of the soul, and this phrase may indicate a truth. But the soul has its essence and its form, as the body has its essence and its form. The man, the human being, has his essence and his form. He is first spiritual, and then material. He is first that which makes him to be a man, and then this human essence ulti-

mates itself in a human body, which clothes the human essence, and responds to its true form, and to some extent reveals it. In the other world, this body is formed of spiritual substance; it is so here also, for the man has a body formed of spiritual substance, — a spiritual body; and, while he lives here, he has also a body formed of material substance, deriving its life from the spiritual body which, for a time, it clothes. In both worlds, the body is an adequate instrument of the soul, and presents it forth to view. Remembering, then, that the body is itself only the shape, and not the form, of the man, but that it is adjusted to the form and reveals this form, — let us now see what lessons we may draw from the human form, as thus expressed and revealed.

In the first place, let us notice the probable perfection of this form; by which I mean that there can be no better form. If we believe what the Bible says, — that man was made in the image and likeness of God, — we shall look upon the human form as the express image of the Divine form, which must needs be perfection itself. Neither art nor science can improve upon the human form. All that can be done to represent the beautiful is to represent it as perfectly as possible; and physiology is full of acknowledgment of the wonderful adaptation of the whole and all its parts to the performance of

their functions: and, as the knowledge of anatomy advances, this is seen more clearly. It may well be called the type of form; because all organisms, vegetable or animal, aspire towards the human form. In the least and lowest of them there is something which, to say the least, reminds one of some portion or some function of the human form. Science is now busy and successful in seeking through the whole organic world for organs, members, or limbs which appear to represent organs, members, or limbs of the human body; and to be indeed the same, excepting so far as they are changed by other needs and other circumstances.

In the next place, let us notice the indefinite diversity among the innumerable parts which compose this whole. No two are altogether alike. While this would be readily admitted as to all the organs or limbs, it may be thought that the minute cells and fibrils are alike in substance, shape, and function. But every cell and every fibril fills its own place, and performs precisely the function which that place requires. However similar, it is as certain that no two can perform precisely the same function in the same way, as it is that they cannot occupy the same place.

Then let us notice the law which prevails through all this immeasurable diversity of shape and place and function: it is that each part works for others,

and not for itself. All the parts which compose this wonderful whole are connected together by a perfect symmetry, and the meaning and the effect of this symmetry is, that each one is so formed and so placed that it does its own especial work; and the work of each one is so adjusted to every other, that the whole work of the human body is the common resultant of the work of each part. While each one works for all, all work for each. Nor is it strictly true that no part works for itself. Each part does work for itself just so far as to profit by the work of others for it, to the extent of securing to itself the nourishment and strength necessary for its health, and for its healthy performance of the work it has to do in the organic whole. When this is perfectly true of all parts of the body, there is perfect health. Disease comes when any organ fails in its duty, and especially whenever any organ works for itself primarily, and takes more than it needs of vitality or substance. Then other organs suffer for want of that which the offending organ unduly appropriates, and the offending organ suffers for its selfishness by engorgement or inflammation. The symmetry of action is impaired or destroyed, — and that symmetry is health, and the want of it disease.

If we believe that the human form is an image of the Divine form, and therefore the most perfect of forms, we may well believe that the creative energy

is always in effort to bring all things into or towards this form, but leaving all things as far away from it as their several functions may require. An important application of this principle is to human society. But we can understand that better, if we look at it in its perfection in heaven. That I will endeavor to do in my chapter on heaven. Here I will only say that the whole heaven stands before the Lord in a human form — not shape, but form; that it is composed of larger societies, and these of lesser, and these again of still less; that every society is in a true form, — that is, in the human form; that these societies differ from each other, as men differ from each other while all are men; and that the various members of a complete society correspond in character, function, and use, to the different organs of that human body which clothes and expresses the human form. This is carried to the minutest detail, and determines the order of heaven, and makes that orderly. And, as heaven grows in its completeness, its harmony becomes fuller and richer; and the whole heaven, and all the several societies — larger and smaller — approach more nearly to perfection.

There are frequent expressions which show that the idea of the human form as the type of all form has found its way to human consciousness. Thus, we speak of this man as the head of a society, and of others as its members; we say this one supplies

it with brains, and that those are the strong hands that do its work. This reference goes down to the most familiar things; and thus we speak of the arms, legs, feet, face, back, and the like, of things in common use. The answer which would now be made to all this is, These are but casual analogies which the imaginative faculty, always on the lookout for materials, has laid hold of and embodied in common language.

This may be partially true, but it is very far from the whole truth. When social organization shall have advanced far beyond its present condition, and rational imagination shall have grown more acute and wiser, it will see in society many more of what it now calls analogies. Ages, perhaps ages of ages, must elapse before human society can advance so far as to recognize its own best principles of organization. Earth will always be earth, not heaven, and disorder will mingle with its order; because it will always be the state and condition in which we may prepare for heaven by conflict and by effort, and by choosing between the elements and influences of good or of evil. But even now we may learn the lessons this truth yields, and hereafter they may grow larger, and be more clearly seen, and come to us with greater power.

The first and greatest of these lessons is one which the whole universe and the whole course of

Divine Providence are constantly giving to all who are willing to receive it. This is that usefulness — working for others, and doing good to others — is the one law of health and happiness; while selfishness, in affection and in life, is the one centre from which radiate all disorder and all suffering. The Divine mercy surrounds almost every man with circumstances which compel him to be useful. The greediest self-seeker, who cares only for himself in all he does, is often in his most selfish exertions eminently useful. This has no direct effect upon his character. That he is useful to others does not render him less selfish. But it is a good thing to have the habit of usefulness. If the efforts of Providence to lead him from the love of self to the love of others are ever in any degree successful, he will not be under the additional necessity of learning to be useful. In point of fact, the highest charity for most men, or the best form of usefulness for them, lies in the complete discharge of their daily duties; for the mercy of God always so adjusts these to their spiritual needs, that the best way in any hour for men to advance spiritually is simply to do the duty of that hour.

The difference between the good man and the bad man lies in the difference in the motives which govern their acts, more than it does in the acts themselves. Of course, some acts are good and others bad; and there are persons who habitually practise those acts

which all call bad, and others whose actions seem to be always good. But these are exceptions. The majority of mankind lead lives of not so much difference in appearance, while there is actually between them all the difference between good and evil, — between heaven and hell. He through whose discharge of duty there runs the desire and purpose of doing his duty and being useful to others, is good; and this goodness may be infinitely diversified in kind and in measure among men who are good. While he whose constant and dominant purpose is to serve himself and his own selfish desires, and who, when he is useful to others, is so only for the sake of himself, is not good, however he may be regarded by his fellowmen, who can judge only from appearances.

Charity, or love for others, and selfishness, are the two great opposites, between which all human life is included. If we would understand why this is so, we must go back to the original and fundamental truth that God creates man by effluence from Himself, and makes him, as far as may be, like unto Himself. His very essence is love for others. It is love which causes Him continually to create and to sustain the universe, spiritual and material; which causes Him to be infinitely useful, and to find His infinite happiness in His infinite usefulness. And it is the same love which leads Him to do all that His infinite power can

do, to excite in his children a love of doing good, — a love of usefulness, that by this He may make them happy. The opposite of this love is selfishness. Between these opposites every man must *choose*, that his love of others, if he chooses that, may be his own. Between these opposites every man does choose; and this choice determines his destiny, because it determines his character.

God is One; but He is not “without form and void.” He is One and Infinite; but He is an Infinite composed of infinites. One way in which He reveals Himself to us is in our own human form; and the parts and members of His Divine form, each perfectly distinct, but perfectly responsive to every other, and each in perfect sympathy with all, — all these members and activities, combining together into a perfect unity, compose or constitute God: and the correspondent to the whole and to each part is the human form. Every human being is taught and trained in this life, so far as he will permit, to take his proper place and do his proper work in that form. For it is the form of heaven, and heaven grows eternally by accessions from the earth; and the members added to it, as they rise from this world to the other, are not mere additions to a chaotic mass, only enlarging its size or the number of its components, — but each takes his own appropriate place, precisely as every part of added

food, assimilated to a healthy human body and incorporated therein, takes its appropriate place. There every one is known, and his whole character and function are defined and manifested by his place in the human form of heaven. This angel is in the head, that one in the heart, and that one in the lungs; this one in the hand, and that one in the foot; this one in the eye, and that one in the ear, — and so of every part, and of every minutest part of a part. Symmetry, sympathy, and health belong to the whole; and the health and happiness of the whole belong to each.

Pride and humiliation are equally impossible where order is perfect, and it perfectly discriminates between all who are there. The highest cannot forget, and have no desire to forget, their entire dependence upon all the rest. The lowest feel and know that they are essential to the rest, and that this is seen and acknowledged by them. For each one knows that he fills a place which would not be filled or not so well filled, and does a work which would not be done or not so well done, if he were not there. All know this of all; and all help each to do his work, and the work of each is for all.

This is the perfection of human society. In its perfection it will never be found, except in the heavens. For, as already intimated, always will the earths be training schools, in which influences

from above and from beneath, with the order and the disorder they bring with them, will mingle; that, through them all, man, in his ownhood of his life and in his freedom, may coöperate with God Himself in preparing to take the place which he is fit for among the happy. But, while this perfection of human society will never be reached upon the earth, it may always be approached. And it will be approached in the degree in which mutual love and the love of usefulness prevail over selfishness in all its forms, and give force and vitality to the acknowledgment of the universal brotherhood of man, — the child of our Father in the heavens.

Already has the study of the human form, and a comparison of it with other forms, suggested at least a thought of its central position among them all. Far more than this is to come; for truth is eternal, and has eternity for its development. Hereafter the study of the human form will be found to be central among human studies, as the form itself is central among forms. Unbounded treasures will repay this study; and in some future day, it will be found that an increase of knowledge of the human body (because the body is the effect, the instrument, and the expression of the human form) will enlarge the knowledge of the soul, and of the laws of all true life.

CHAPTER XI.

HEAVEN.

ALL men live after this life is ended; and in the next life live as they will to live, far more than they can in this life. It has already been repeatedly said that we live here to prepare for life there; and because this preparation can be made only by conflict and self-compulsion, and we are often led to this or aided in it by external compulsion, our life here is more or less a life of coercion, and all our surroundings are controlled for us, and are made to be what we need, which is only in small part what we desire. After death, the preparation we have made is developed in the world of spirits, our ruling love freed by the suppression of opposing and inconsistent tendencies, and our whole character brought into such harmony as is possible.

One effect of this is that intellectual and affectional affinity have full play. Here all live together, — the good and the evil mingled, — with but little of separation possible; because, by this mingling, we can best help each other in this life of preparation.

Not so is it there. For there the law of affinity brings the good together, and separates them from those who are not good. Where the good are is Heaven. But the attraction of affinity does far more than separate the good from the evil: it arranges them into societies, so that those who are of like kind live together. These societies in Heaven are innumerable: greater and greatest, — the larger composed of lesser, and the lesser of least; and each society has its own peculiarities and its own work, differing from every other in its character, function, and use, as every individual in every society differs from every other.

The law which pervades the whole is the law of the human form, — form, I repeat, not shape. This form I have treated of in the preceding chapter. I will repeat that it is man's form because it is God's form; and it comes to man with the life of God, which is given him to be his own, and which makes man to be man because God is Man. This Divine form is perfect; and Heaven is for ever growing into the likeness and image of this form. Hence there is an ever-growing order and harmony among all the parts of Heaven; that is, among all the societies of Heaven, and all the individuals who compose those societies. There is also order, and this an ever-growing order, in the arrangement of Heaven. The societies are lesser and greater, and all are

arranged into three, — which are three heavens, and which, taken together, constitute Heaven.

THE THREE HEAVENS.

In our chapter on Degrees, and that on the Human Form, we have indicated the two principles which may help us to understand the arrangement of Heaven into three heavens. A distinction into three discrete degrees is universal, existing in God Himself, and from Him pervading all things. In Him it is love, wisdom, and power, or action. It divides Heaven into three heavens. In the highest of these, which Swedenborg calls the Heavenly heaven, love to the Lord is the ruling and all-pervading principle. In the middle heaven, called by Swedenborg the Spiritual heaven, wisdom, truth, a living faith which recognizes charity or love of the neighbor as the law of life, prevails. The lower heaven, called the natural heaven, is characterized by obedience. If we look at these heavens in the light of their correspondence with the human form, we may say that the highest heaven corresponds with the head, the middle heaven with the chest and trunk, the lowest heaven with the limbs. Nor is this correspondence general only. As each of these three great divisions of the human form is composed of larger parts, and these of lesser, and these again of still lesser, until the series closes in innumerable individual cells or

molecules, so in each heaven are larger and smaller and still smaller societies. In the human form, not only are the larger members and the components of these specifically different, but it is as impossible for any two of the smallest cells or minute parts of the body to exercise precisely the same function, or stand in precisely the same relation to the rest, as it would be for them to occupy the same place at the same time. Nor is there any thing accidental or arbitrary in all this infinite variety. Every member of the body, great or small, and every minutest portion of every member, has precisely that special work to do which best enables it to promote the health, strength, and usefulness of the whole body, drawing from this general health its own well-being. All are in harmony, — each one being that and doing that which all the rest require.

Precisely so is it in Heaven. There, too, this exact distinction between all the members and component parts, this perfect harmony between them, this coöperation of all in the universal good, is the constant law of life. This is effected in a healthy and vigorous human body, because it exists in Heaven; and because Heaven is in a human form, and the human body in its true form corresponds with Heaven. Nor is this correspondence general only, for it is precise and specific. Whatever be the use or function of any part of the human body,

larger or less, some part of Heaven performs a corresponding use or function, and finds therein its health and happiness. Not the whole human body only, but every member in its whole structure down to its minutest component parts, and the action of all and each, has its antitype and cause in heaven. So through the whole universe the life of God goes forth, creating all, sustaining all, pervading all; and impressing upon all, as far as that is possible, the order which exists in absolute and infinite perfection in Himself.

THE TWO KINGDOMS OF HEAVEN.

We may notice still another point in the correspondence between Heaven and man, or another fact resulting from the human form of Heaven. Every member of the human race has will and understanding; and these are distinct and yet united. In every man one or the other prevails, for they are never precisely equal. In this man, the will controls, and his affectionate and loving nature are always prominent. That man seems to be a man of intellect only; he may be as brilliant as ice, but he is as cold. All his affections seem to ask leave of his understanding to be, and to exhibit themselves. These extremes are perhaps rarely met with. But they only carry to excess a difference which is universal. Men with a perfect balance

between these two elements of our being are not met with. Some come very near it, but all stand on the one side or the other, at a greater or less distance from the middle point; and are either somewhat more intellectual than affectional, or the reverse. So it is with the heavens: with each heaven, and every society in heaven, and every individual there. The highest heaven, in its relation to all below it, is a heaven of love; but it has its affectional and its intellectual side. The spiritual or middle heaven is a heaven where wisdom rules, and the love of the neighbor, founded on the truths which wisdom teaches, is the law of life; but this heaven also has its affectional and its intellectual side. The natural or lowest heaven, which is the heaven of obedience, consists of those who obey from affection, and those who obey from a sincere and intelligent recognition of the truth. This distinction, which runs through the heavens, is expressed by Swedenborg in the statement that all Heaven is divided into two kingdoms.

As the distinction into three heavens is represented in the human body, so is the distinction into two kingdoms. We have a heart, representing in its action and influence the affectional side; and lungs, representing the intellectual side. The brain is divided into two hemispheres, — one on the right side, and the other on the left. The limbs, the ears,

the eyes, are on the one side and on the other. The liver has its two lobes; the kidneys are two-fold; and single organs generally have, like the brain, two halves, although these are not always so apparently distinct from each other as in the case of the brain. The distinction corresponding to that of the three heavens is, if we may so express it, horizontal; while that representing the two kingdoms may be said to be vertical.

Every one who dies, and in the world of spirits has passed through such discipline and development that his ruling love dominates and forms his character without resistance or impediment, if he be good, takes his place in Heaven. This place is determined by his character. That places him not only in the heaven to which he belongs, but in that society, and in the place in that society, for which he has become fitted. He is in the closest affinity with all who are there, and they with him; and there he finds his eternal home.

THE EMPLOYMENTS OF HEAVEN.

God is infinitely active. His infinite action creates, sustains, and governs the universe of spirit and of matter. His life flows into angels and becomes their life; and His activity is in the life which is derived from Him. It follows necessarily that every angel is active and useful. In the language of Swe-

denborg, heaven is a kingdom of uses. Every one there gratifies the tendency and the demand of his own life in performing the use which he can best perform. These uses grow and rise as he grows and rises in Godlikeness. Every angel finds in the consciousness of this constant growth one of the elements of his happiness. But no angel becomes radically other than that he was prepared to be when he left this world. He does not change his heaven, for that depends upon the essential qualities of his character; and they are permanent and unchangeable. He finds his happiness in the performance of his use, and in the consciousness of the unending growth and elevation in his performance of it. I need not say that it must be impossible for us to form an adequate idea of the employments of the angels, for it is obvious and certain. But there are some facts and some principles which may lead our thoughts in that direction.

Many good things are done in this world. The greatest amount of human effort is of that kind. How many men are busy through life in providing food, how many in furnishing shelter or clothing, for others!—and how many in the vast variety of uses which subserve the comfort and enjoyment of life! These are all good works, and we are constrained to do them by the merey of our Father; for so His will is done on earth, though not as it is

done in heaven, for there it is done without constraint. But of this, we who adopt the doctrines of the New-Church are sure: the motives and the thoughts which induce us to do these things are all from the spiritual world, and, so far as they are good, from heaven. All the good works on earth have their prototypes in heaven; and whatsoever good things men do in an earthly way, angels are doing — not in the same, but in a heavenly way. What this way is we do not know now, for the reason that we know so little of the correspondence which connects all things of this world with all things of the other.

We may go still further. We may remember that whatsoever God can do through living and conscious instruments, He does through them; for so He blesses them. It is His sun and His rain which, coming down upon the fields He has spread out, raise and ripen all our food; but He gives to men to be His instruments in this, and thus they acquire the habit, and if they are capable of it enjoy the happiness, of usefulness. From this lowest instance of this universal law, our thoughts may go upwards indefinitely. Science now permits us to look at the material heavens, and catch a glimpse of the way in which they are builded. With the best instruments, we can but look upon an edge of the universe or a small spot within it; but we can see innumerable

stars, all of which are probably suns, and may have habitable earths around them. We see nebulæ of every description: in some, we may look upon the spiral forms which indicate that they are growing into worlds of suns and earths; in others, we may see this growth so far advanced that a central sun is there already; and in others, only amorphous masses of light-mist, over which countless æons have yet to pass. And perhaps we may believe that each created sun and planet in its turn, when its work is finished, is gradually resolved into its primal atoms, which mingle with those that fill the universe; at some distant cycle again to coalesce into masses, and build up new worlds,—thus repeating, on a larger scale, the circle of death and life which we see everywhere on our own earth. We may go on in this path of what, if it be as yet only hypothesis, is at least reasonable hypothesis, until the imagination is weary and faint.

Now let us remember that all this is God's work, and that all of His work which He can He puts into the hands of His living instruments; and then what employment is there for angels in their various ranks, and in their various degrees of advancement, of wisdom, and of power! And, as in this world, beside all the external uses which are done here, there are those who find full employment for their best ability in the world of thought and truth, so in the heavens,

above all the work of building and sustaining the universe as His instruments, there may be those who find their usefulness and happiness in ever learning truths which are ever ascending towards His own infinite wisdom. And they learn that they may teach, for they know how much more blessed it is to give than to receive. And from them, even the highest of them, this wisdom comes down in far descent, through all the ordered ranks of intelligences, and so modified and accommodated in this descent, that at last it reaches us, and pours into our understanding all the truth we are capable of receiving in this beginning of being.

ANGELS.

It is common for those who believe any thing about angels to regard them as a race of created beings who are altogether other than men, and far higher than men. This belief is confirmed by the text which says, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels." But Swedenborg declares that all angels began life as human beings, upon this or some other earth, however brief the stay of some of them upon earth. A line of thought which leads to this conclusion is suggested by the principle, that the best thing which perfect and almighty Love could do for its creatures was to create them such that, by working as of themselves in voluntary co-

operation with their Father, and by the exercise of strength which He gives them as their own, they might rise, step by step, from a far-off beginning, to a condition in which it would be possible for Him to impart to them a large measure of His own life and happiness; and that this measure might increase with their constant and unending elevation towards Himself. He makes men to be themselves; that in the exercise of their own power, which is their own because He gives it to them, they might become capable, not of absorption into His infinitude, but of a conjunction with Him which may grow nearer and closer, for ever and for ever. The infinite happiness of God springs from His infinite activity in good. By their conjunction with Him, men may become at once His ministers and servants, and co-workers with Him in the whole work of creation, preservation, and government of the universe. And this, men who have become angels are. What more could angels be?

Whatever we may imagine angels to be, whatever capacity of acting as His ministers we may suppose them to have, whatever measure of love or wisdom, or of happiness resulting therefrom, we may suppose them to possess,—it is simply impossible for the most vivid and soaring imagination to surpass or to approach that point upon which human beings must stand, who, having profited by the

means He gave them, through the revolving cycles which time cannot measure, have gone ever upwards in their approach to the Infinite. Higher beings than these could not be created, and could not exist. Whatever might be our belief in the desire of God to bring into being creatures whom He might bless with the utmost happiness, we may still believe that He would form for this purpose such creatures as He has formed men, with all their boundless hopes and possibilities; because to them, in the condition within their reach, might be given the highest happiness a being less than infinite could enjoy.

The idea of a race of beings higher than men has perhaps grown out of the thought that Infinite love and power could not be contented with beings so imperfect, so feeble, so far from happiness as men are, — as we see them. But when we are taught that what we see of human life is but its beginning, and think as well as we may of what will attend the full development of those powers which we here dimly discern in their germ condition, we are sure that even Infinite love and power would be satisfied with what men might become, and, in their homes in Heaven, do become.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WORD.

HERE, as elsewhere in the consideration of topics of religious philosophy, we must begin with God, and with His purpose in creating and providing for mankind. This purpose was that beings might exist whom He could make happy; and therefore He made them such in capacity and character that He might for ever help them to be happy and to grow in happiness. The animals He had made He could make happy, but their happiness is not capable of eternal increase; while man's is so. Here is one of the radical distinctions between men and animals. And because of this, there exists another of these radical distinctions, — language: men have the faculty of speech, and animals have not.

God is constantly in the effort to carry into effect His own infinite purpose. The whole nature of man, and all that contributes to the constitution of that nature, is so made as to be an instrument which God can use to carry His purpose into effect. Language is one of these instruments, and a most impor-

tant one. Words are the simplest things in the world: to utter them is as easy a matter as breathing; and, indeed, they are only breath made vocal. And yet words are among the most mysterious things in the world. The origin of language is wholly unknown; and no one of the many theories about it seems to be acceptable to many beside him who announces it. But the true nature of language and its influence and effect are almost as much unknown as its origin. We do know, however, much of what it is and does for man, for this is apparent at the first glance.

Words serve for means of intercourse, because they enable men to communicate to each other their thoughts and feelings, and to impress these upon each other and make them common to speaker and hearers,—and thus unite men in a common thought or feeling. Then words serve for the preservation of thoughts and feelings. They preserve them by tradition, if they are delivered for safe-keeping only to memory and transmission by repetition. Of late there have been quite interesting conclusions as to the method, and the extent and accuracy, with which a wide and complex system of doctrines could be continuously preserved by such transmission,—as in the case of the earliest Hindu beliefs. These conclusions have been drawn from distinct intimations in ancient records of the system-

atic and well-devised means which were successfully employed to make this transmission accurate.

Then came a farther improvement, — that of writing, — which is almost as marvellous as the origin of language. This gave to all the uses of words new power and efficacy; and when, a few centuries ago, a farther improvement in the use of words — that of printing — took place, they gained still farther power and efficacy.

If we believe that the use of words or mutual language is peculiarly human, and indispensable to human improvement; that the power of speech is given to man by God; that it is adapted to his whole nature and needs, as the means by which truth may be given him that will help him to build up in himself a heavenly character; if we believe that all human life flows into man from God, and therefore whatever is in man, humanly, must be in God, divinely, — well may it be asked, Why should not God speak to man? Why should He not make use of this instrument of language to give to man knowledge which he could not otherwise possess? The answer to this question is, He has spoken to man, and He does speak to him. He does in fact make use of man's power of hearing, of reading, and of understanding language, to communicate to men truths which could not otherwise be given to them.

God speaks to man through men into whom He

breathes His spirit. He makes use of their minds, their thoughts, their affections, their mouths, their language, to say to His children what He would. It is true that every thought and every affection which any man has comes to him from God. But the common and normal way is for these thoughts and affections to be modified and qualified by the mediums through which they flow, into affinity and adaptedness to the man's state; in order that, when they reach man, they may be given to man to be his own: and they thereby become man's, and not God's. It is sometimes said of men of great genius, — as Homer, Shakspeare, Milton, — that they were inspired. But this use of the word confounds things essentially different. Whatever comes normally to any individual is always modified into conformity with his peculiar and individual state and faculty, but always so that, when he receives it, it becomes his own. Not so is it with the subjects of inspiration. Their ownhood of themselves is for the time suspended. They are filled with the spirit of God. They utter or write what is thus given to them. This may be somewhat modified in the form it takes by the mental character, or by the habits of thought and feeling of the person employed for this use, as instruments modify the work that is done by them; but not so as to make the words their own words, for they are, and they remain, God's words.

How it was in the earliest condition of mankind we know not. There was probably a long period during which such words were only spoken, and were delivered over to memory and transmission by tradition. But at length more could be done. Our Bible, which we call emphatically the Word of God, was given to mankind, and in the languages best suited to this use. It was not given all at once. Words, perhaps preserved only by tradition from an earlier age, made a part of it. In following ages, a succession of persons employed for this use, who differed much from each other, and whose personal peculiarities are to some extent impressed upon their work, added the books of the Old Testament. At a later period, the Gospels and the Book of Revelation were added, — finally completing this Word of God.

Emanuel Swedenborg was not one of those so employed to write the words of God. He was not inspired. We repeat what we said before. He was selected for the use he performed, as a man of remarkable intellect, which was as fully cultivated and prepared by study and work as was possible; and he was then taught spiritual truth in a way in which it had never been taught to any man. He was assisted in every possible way to understand it; and as he understood it, and only so, he communicates it to others in his writings. The idea that these writ-

ings were intended to supersede in any way or measure the Word of God, or to add to it or supplement it, would have shocked him; for the purpose of his whole work was to enforce and illustrate that Word.

What must be the difference between the Word of God and the words of men? No one can answer this question fully; but some things we may say about it. For if we believe that all life proceeds from Him, that it flows forth, forming many successive spheres of being, using each higher one as the medium through which it forms the nearest lower, and finally ultimating itself in the lowest, we may believe that this is the law of the truth flowing forth from Him, and ultimating itself in the words which are given to man. This truth is the same truth in each of these degrees or spheres, — the highest and the lowest; but in each of them it has the form which is suited to that degree of being. All these degrees or forms of truth are ultimated in and are contained in the last and lowest, — the written Word. If this were a man's word, the truth would have flowed down to it through all these planes of being; but when it reached man and became his thought, it would have become his own, and would have been no longer God's truth, but what the state and character of the man made it to be. But the Word of God, although expressed by the use of

human instruments, was never given to them as their own; for their ownhood of life was suspended, that they might become these instruments.

In the Word, all these higher forms of truth, or all these truths, are in the lowest or literal form. This is made possible by the law of correspondence, which connects all these degrees of being together, and all with Him from whom they flow forth as from their primal cause. By force of this law, every lower degree responds to the higher which was its causative medium, and is that higher in a lower form. By force of this law, every truth in the Word upon a lower plane responds to a truth upon a higher plane, and is that truth expressed in a lower form. All these truths are there, and we may arrange them into two classes: one, the lowest, literal sense; the other, the higher or spiritual sense.

These truths are there. But are they there *for man*? Yes, by force of this same law of correspondence; for a knowledge of this correspondence explains and applies this law, and, by the interpretation of the lowest sense, unveils the meaning of a higher sense. Each lower sense veils the higher from those who live on the lower plane of being to which that lower sense is adapted, and whose minds are not lifted above that lower plane. The knowledge of correspondences lifts the mind upwards and makes the lowest sense transparent. This

knowledge may be systematized; and this systematized knowledge is the science of correspondence.

This science is now given to man; not in its fullness and entirety, for that would be beyond its possible reception, and therefore it would be given in vain. We live in the beginning of a new era. Divine Providence has waited for the need and the possibility of even this beginning. The thick darkness which has gathered through the long succession of ages of ignorance and falsity still hangs upon us all. If, through these ages, seeds of truth and light have been sown and germinated and grown, and have at last made it possible for new and greater light to be thrown upon the darkness, this great gift must still be given under the universal law of adaptation to those to whom it is given, and therefore to us only in an inchoate and incomplete manner. This science was taught to Swedenborg, and is given to mankind by him. He has given us the fact of correspondence and its general laws and principles. He has given us, by an application of these principles, the spiritual sense of Genesis, Exodus, and the Apocalypse; and, in illustration and enforcement of the meaning of these books, he has given the spiritual meaning of many passages in other books of Scripture.

The universal correspondence between all the planes of being has made it possible to include all

truths within the form and expression of literal truth. The science of correspondence teaches the higher truths which lie within the lower. In doing this, it will show that whatever thing exists in Nature had a spiritual cause, and from that a spiritual meaning. All the order and beauty and magnificence of Nature, which, even in their mystery, have lifted up some happy hearts to their Creator, — all will be made vocal; and their songs of praise — perfect in harmony, and ever-growing in melody — will sound, even to men's hearts, the wisdom and power, and, more than all, the goodness of Him who is the All-Father. Then will the prophecy be fulfilled; for "He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations."

Is this a work to be done at once or soon? The science of astronomy, from the far-distant ages when the watchers of the stars on the plains of Chaldea first observed them, has been growing to this day; when, however perfect some may think it, other and wise men regard it as only in its beginning. This new science is as much more radiant than the other as the stars of the spirit are brighter than the stars of the sky, as much higher as the laws of heaven are higher than the laws of material worlds; and who will count the ages which must elapse before it can attain what may be regarded as a full development?

Man is not born into the faculty of speech or of reading and writing, but with the capacity of acquiring these faculties; and they can be acquired only step by step, and by continuous effort. So must it be with learning to read the spiritual sense of Scripture and the meaning of the book of Nature. These things also must be learned only step by step, and by continuous effort. He who enters upon the investigation of the science of correspondence, and gives it up because of the difficulties he meets with at the beginning of his study, acts like the petulant child, who, discouraged by the efforts required, casts his book away, insisting that it cannot be read, or that it is not worth reading. Speech was given to man, probably, soon after he began to be; then, after a long period, came written language, and, after another period, the invention of printing. Now, a new faculty is placed within his reach; for the fact of correspondence of all that is without with all that is within is made known to him; and with this fact the principles are given which will enable him to acquire some knowledge of the science that discovers and explains these correspondences. It would be impossible to forecast the whole effect of this consummating gift; it is the close of an ascending series: the close, because it deals with infinites and universals, and can never be exhausted; and nothing more can be given but added means

of acquiring, comprehending, and applying this science. We may regard it as a reasonable conclusion, that so much as the arts of writing and printing have done towards elevating and advancing men beyond the point they could have reached had these gifts been withheld, so much will the science of correspondance—in the far-distant ages, when its work shall reach a high development—do towards elevating and advancing men beyond the point which they could have reached had this science never been given.

As yet we have nothing like an elementary or educational work adapted to beginners in the study of this science. Swedenborg assumes it as existing, and applies it as he has occasion to the passages of Scripture he explains. He does little more than this, and nothing more has been done; but he lays down with great clearness the principles of the science, and from these will be evolved in coming time all that will be necessary or useful to those who would learn this science.

THE BIBLE.

Of the Bible which we have, a few of the earliest chapters were taken from an earlier Word, which differed from the present, inasmuch as it contained only truths of correspondance; that is, only a spiritual meaning, and not literal truth. Under the

form of an historical account of the creation of the natural world, and the fall of man, and finally the almost total extinction of men, — they describe the beginning, the decay, and termination of a spiritual creation; or of the establishment and decline of the earliest church among men. These chapters were placed as an introduction to the Word which we have, in part because, by their apparent description of the creation and early history of the world, they serve as a fitting introduction to the historical Word. They are placed there far more because in their spiritual meaning they set forth truths of infinite moment, eternal duration, and universal application, concerning the birth, growth, and perils of spiritual goodness in every man and every age and every church.

After the long period during which primeval man lived "*sicut feræ*," or in a way of life but little higher than that of animals, "The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Spiritual light dawned upon the heaving waste of his merely natural life, and the first Church was established. Swedenborg says it was established in Mesopotamia and the countries adjacent for a considerable distance; when or how many ages ago we know not. He calls this the "Most Ancient Church." It was very peculiar, responding to the needs of the infancy of mankind. In its beginning, it was

pure and holy; and it subsequently fell away, and became wholly corrupted, through the abuse of that freedom which is given to man for his highest good. This abuse caused an evil influence to come forth from elements of human nature which are inseparable from it,—the ownhood of life, and power of self-determination,—because without them man would be incapable of “working out his salvation,” and building himself into the largest receptibility of the gift of happiness. He was told not to eat of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” To eat, is to appropriate to ourselves; we make what we eat our own and a part of ourselves. He was permitted to discern most distinctly the difference between good and evil; and all good influences told him and taught him, that this knowledge was given him from God for his guidance; and all evil influences told him and taught him, that this knowledge was his own, not by gift from his Creator, but in its origin,—that it was self-acquired, and belonged to him by virtue of the power and intelligence which were self-derived and self-possessed. These evil influences told him to cast away all grateful acknowledgment of God as the giver of all knowledge and of all truth, to eat of this tree, and be to himself “as God, knowing good and evil” from himself. To these influences he yielded. He denied and deserted his

God, and strove to avoid the thought of Him, or to hide from His presence; he became as God to himself, and worshipped himself. So he fell from his high estate. So the Church fell from its early innocence; not by the disobedience of one man, nor by one act, but by a long-descending course of failure in temptation, until there grew up a state of mind in which man gave the victory within himself to evil influences over good ones, — to evil over good. And this is symbolized in the account of what we call the Fall of Man.

When the spirit of God moves upon the face of the waters in any mind, and there is in it the first germination of good, there is some foretaste of peace. But soon the tempter comes. He moves us to look upon our goodness as our own work. A conflict begins between this influence, this temptation, and all within us which recognizes our own impurity, and our inability to cope with it without strength from on high, and which inspires humble gratitude to the Divine mercy which has given us this strength. Every feeling of this kind is insidiously attacked by our sensuous nature; for this tells us that we have conquered by our own strength, and the very goodness we are conscious of becomes an evil thing, for it is corrupted into food for self-pride and self-love, and builds up a barrier against all recognition, obedience, worship, or love of Him to whom these are

due. If this enemy of our souls prevails, we fall. Well is this sensuous nature symbolized by the serpent, which cannot leave the ground; and, if it conquers in this strife and holds its victory, will creep upon its belly and feed on dust for evermore. And in these days how it clings to the ground, looking upon sense and sensuous thought as the only teacher of truth, and finding all its nourishment in the dust of the earth! Happily we are told, that while it will continue to bruise the heel, or that part of human nature which comes in contact with all that belongs to earth, "the seed of the woman" shall eventually bruise its head.

This first fall of man, which includes all subsequent decline, is followed by the successive decay of this Church, which is treated of in the following chapters.

The next prominent fact narrated symbolizes the next essential element of spiritual death. Because of the long-continued indulgence and confirmation of the evil thing, we are now born with the inheritance of a proclivity to self-pride and self-love. We can resist and overcome it, only by learning the truth which exposes its true nature and tells us how to suppress it, and then by obeying this truth. In this work, the understanding must take the lead, and gradually reform and purify the will, which will then be filled with true life—the life of love. Faith must

take the lead, and open the way for charity. Faith is the first born, and is represented by Cain, while charity is represented by Abel. Faith, truth, must take the lead; but only in the beginning, and until charity comes into full life, — for all the worth of faith consists in its leading to charity. But in human nature there lies deeply hidden the propensity to exalt faith over charity, belief over life, the understanding over the will. Faith seeks to rule alone, to claim all sovereignty, to be the master while charity is the servant; and at length charity is wholly thrown aside as valueless, while to faith alone is attributed the whole work of salvation. Then the end is reached, and Cain kills Abel.

It is commonly thought, by those who think about the matter at all, that “faith alone” is to be found only in the theological doctrines which rest upon it as their basis. This is indeed a very great mistake. They are but a consummation of that which in less intensity is very common. “Faith alone” shows itself everywhere to those who know how to recognize its presence in its influence and effects. Wheresoever there is a preference of belief over life and act, a disposition to think that character and destiny are determined by belief rather than by the affections which govern the life (a disposition which easily passes into the substitution of profession for belief); wherever there is any ten-

dency to consider profession and a name as having some virtue in themselves, whether it be slight or strong enough to make us prominent and violent in defence of the doctrines which we think are saving us without the trouble of goodness; wherever there is a willingness to consider mere belief and loud assertion of truth as the equivalent of loving it and living it; wheresoever the intellect is placed above the heart, and culture, knowledge, and mere belief have a value assigned to them which is disconnected from life and character, — there is faith alone. And are not its traces everywhere?

This most ancient Church continued to decline through a period which was probably a very long one. The stages of this decline were marked, each having its own peculiarities; and they constituted what may be regarded as derivative or subordinate churches of the most ancient Church. They are designated by the series of antediluvian patriarchs, none of whom were persons. The peculiarities of each were described in the events which befell each, and intimated in their names. At length the consummation came. Falsities had overwhelmed the Church like a deluge. They were so extreme and intense that they suffocated even natural life, and this was nearly extinguished in that Church. A few only survived, who were represented by Noah, and with them there began a new Church, differing alto-

gether from that which preceded it. This Ancient Church, — for so this Church, beginning with Noah, is called by Swedenborg, — continued for many ages, which were represented by “the generations of Noah,” and described symbolically by the events and the persons named, until at length it passed away, and was succeeded by the Hebraic Church, which takes its name from Eber, or Heber. This Church also continued through many spiritual changes and generations, and with Abraham, or his immediate ancestry, the history becomes literally true.* Abraham was an actual living man; and

* Within the last half-century, the peculiar learning necessary for a critical examination of the Scriptures has greatly increased, and it has been used by many writers, some of great ability, to prove that the books of the Bible were written by other authors than those whose names they bear, and not in the forms which they now have, nor at the times supposed. It does not fall within the scope of this work to consider these speculations, nor would it be necessary, for these writers do most conclusively refute each other. Of their speculations, which are numerous and utterly discordant, Dean Milman said well, that the authors do not attempt “to make bricks without straw, but to make them wholly of straw, and offer them as solid materials.” Among those opposed to them, some adhere to the literal truth of every word of Scripture, in the belief that a failure in any part of this truth would impeach, if not destroy, the authority of the Scriptures. I do not share this belief nor this fear. The difficulties in holding to the literal truth of the whole Scripture are very great. I do not possess the learning which would enable me to judge of them critically; but of one thing I am entirely confident, and that is, that the books which compose what I consider the inspired Scriptures, were written at such times and by such persons, as to admit of the inspiration which makes them the Word of God.

I have said that the assailants of the literal truth of the Bible hold

with his grandson Jacob, or Israel, the Israelitish Church began,—although it was not fully established until a later day, when the Israelites were led forth from Egypt.

discordant theories, and conclusively refute each other. This they do in most particulars. But there are some general propositions in which they mainly agree; arguments in their favor derived from recent investigations have great force, and they are accepted by most of the defenders of the Bible who do not hold to its exact literal truth. These are,—that the first chapters of Genesis were derived from earlier traditions or scriptures, and are without exact literal truth; that the names of the Patriarchs, which, like all other Hebrew names, are significant, probably served to indicate different races or tribes; that those early chapters, so far as they are historical, refer to a part only of mankind, and to a limited region of the earth; and that there are passages of Scripture which, whether or not interpolated, will not bear a literal construction. Now it is, to say the least, remarkable that Swedenborg, more than a hundred years ago, without the especial learning such investigations require, and before the critical apparatus necessary for them existed, came, in his own way, to conclusions, not in exact, but still in singular, accordance with these. For he holds, as I have already stated, that Genesis, as far as Eber (or rather Heber, from whom came the name of the Hebrews), was taken from an earlier Word, which was so written as to express spiritual truths under the form of a constructed history; that the names of the Patriarchs indicate (not successive tribes or races, but) successive churches, or systems and modes of faith and worship; that the history in these chapters, so far as it is history, relates to a part only of mankind, and to a limited region of the earth (Mesopotamia and the countries adjacent, to a considerable distance); and that in the books which are actually historical are passages in which the spiritual truths to be expressed by correspondence required some departure from literal natural truth, and hence these passages do not describe an actual occurrence, but have a different meaning. This last statement applies, I suppose, not only to the ages of the Patriarchs, but to the numbers in the historical books which seem to present insuperable difficulties.

Recently, there have been earnest efforts to reconcile the established facts of science with the early chapters of Genesis; nor have they been wholly unsuccessful. By supposing a day to mean, not a natural day, but a distinct period of great length, regarding Adam as the parent of a special race, confining the deluge to a limited tract of country, and other similar accommodations, the creation of earth, of animals, and of man as narrated in Genesis, is made to coincide, though very loosely, with the conclusions of geology and other paleontological sciences. So, too, recent discoveries and theories in philology and ethnology have led some persons,—not wholly without reason,—to see in history the Hamites, Shemites, and Japhethites fulfilling the statements and prophecies concerning them. And yet we say that the first eleven chapters of Genesis, as far as the immediate ancestry of Abraham, are without literal truth.

An explanation of this we can give only by referring to the doctrine of correspondences. In those chapters of Genesis we have a spiritual history of mankind, and of the earlier churches. This spiritual history is adequately expressed in what purports to be an external history of mankind, by reason of the correspondence between spiritual things and natural things. These natural things were narrated without reference to actual occur-

reences, but in just such a form as would suffice to represent and signify the spiritual history. But the correspondence between internal and causative facts, and external facts or effects, causes this external history to have some literal truth, or some accordance with actual facts, though only of the most general kind. Times are mentioned as the ages of the patriarchs with so much exactness, that a chronology has been constructed, and, until of late, generally received. But by these patriarchs were signified not men but churches; and as times, like all other natural things, have their correspondence, and through their correspondence their significance, these times, while without literal truth as the lives of men, have their spiritual significance in reference to the churches which bear the names of the patriarchs. If natural science is, or shall be, able to construct a chronology of those primeval times, nothing in the Scripture narrative will, in our view, give to it either support or contradiction.

With Abraham a new order of things begins, and there is a great change in the letter of the Word. It becomes literally historical, although the literal sense continues to be, in the whole and in every part, correspondent to spiritual truth, and significant of that truth.

The Israelitish Church was a most peculiar Church. In fact it never was a true Church, but only a repre-

sentative Church, or rather the representative of a true Church. The Israelitish nation were selected not because they were among the best of men, but because they were very far from this. They were so entirely natural or sensual in thought, character, and disposition, that they could be led along through a series of events such that the narration of them would be made perfectly correspondent and significative, with less harm or peril to themselves than might have been caused to any other race.

To explain this, I must say something of profanation; and the doctrines which relate to this grievous and destructive evil are among the new truths which are now given to men. If truth is offered to a man, he may be perfectly insensible to it; wholly unable to understand it, or to receive it. It will then do him neither good nor harm, for it will not enter into him and make a part of him. It may be asked how can truth do any man harm? If truth be understood, received, and acknowledged, it at once carries with it the duty of obedience, of preservation and cultivation, and of a life in accordance with it. Where truth has been received because the evidence of it or its own inherent light are for the time irresistible, and afterwards, when opposing elements of character come into full force, is rejected and denied and cast out of the life,—there the truth has been the means of great harm:

falsehood is confirmed, and the possibility of a future recovery is diminished. This is the sin of profanation. It is frequently referred to in the Bible, but generally under the veil of symbols. It is represented in the law of Moses by leprosy, that most distressing disease which it is so difficult to cure. In the Gospels, it is referred to as the unpardonable sin. If a man has listened to the truth as the gift of God, and suffered it to amend his heart and life, and afterwards, deluded by the uprising of self-confidence and the pride of self-intelligence, believed that it was all his own work, ascribing it to his self-intelligence and self-excellence, regarding his former belief that it was wrought only by the strength that God gave, as an illusion and a folly, — wofully is that man's state changed for the worse. The devil that left him has returned with seven more to find his former home swept and garnished for his reception and his permanent abode.

Not in Scripture only, but in life and in all Providence, we may see the Divine effort to guard men from this great danger. We may thus understand those texts which say that the Lord hath blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, lest they should see and understand, "and I should heal them." Better is it that they should not be healed, if their temporary health would bring with it more fatal disease.

The Word of God as a whole is addressed to all possible conditions of human beings. Therefore, in its higher and highest senses it speaks to those in the higher and highest of these conditions; and in its lowest and literal sense to those in the lowest of them. It was addressed to the Jews, primarily, in this literal sense; and was in exact adaptation to them, that it might be in exact adaptation to all in all ages, who stand where they stood. There is scarcely a reference in it to another life. All the motives to obedience, whether of promise or of threat, of reward or of punishment, are drawn from this life. In the same sense, it is and always will be addressed to all who, like the Jews, are only natural, and therefore incapable of being moved by any thing more spiritual. To them, as to the Jews, God is a hard and jealous master. So He awakens in them that "fear of the Lord" which is said in the Psalm to be "the beginning of wisdom." Even in this literal sense, there are passages unequalled in sublimity by any human composition, because in them the spiritual shines through the natural; and the good of all ages have found in them instruction, consolation, hope, and joy. But these passages were to the Jews, generally, a dead letter; and if the whole Word had been, in its literal sense, higher than it was, it would have been to them, and to all like them, dead, or worse than dead. It was in

mercy that their eyes were blinded and their hearts hardened by their naturalness; and so it is to-day with all in whom this naturalness and worldliness prevail. They are taught only what will lift them up, — one step, and then another, and another, if they will; until at length they rise out of the darkness of mere naturalism, and stronger and purer light from God out of heaven can reach them without exposing them to the fearful danger of profanation.

This same principle has governed the action of Divine Providence throughout the history of mankind, and in all His dealings with races, nations, and churches, and with every individual. First, stands the law that only through man's free and voluntary coöperation will God give to man His greatest gifts, for only so can they be given in the fullest measure; and therefore from the humblest and lowest condition must mankind and every man of his kind work himself upwards by the strength given him to that end. And with this law comes another: the gifts of truth are always so measured, so qualified, or so withheld, that, while they are ever enough to teach the willing mind and lead the willing heart, they are forced upon no reluctant acceptance, but may be rejected by all who are not willing to receive them. And most of all is Providential care exerted, that spiritual truth shall not become acces-

sible and attractive to those who, when their ruling loves again become triumphant, would be sure to reject or pervert it. Therefore is this great sin of profanation rare. But wholly prevented it cannot be; for whatsoever is given to man is given to his freedom, and he may abuse it even to the extent of profanation if he will, — and he sometimes does.

It may indeed be asked by some, If this new gift of truth on which the New-Church is founded, be of such transcendent worth as I have supposed, why has not He who has given it for the good of mankind provided for its wider and more rapid growth? Why has He deposited it in such feeble hands, and not called some of the princes of knowledge to impart to it the prestige of their greatness, and set it forth with all the charm of eloquence, and all the glory which genius could cast upon it? The answer is, Because it is better for mankind that it should obey the universal law of adaptation. It is better that the progress of this truth should be slow, and its reception so narrow as to be almost unseen, rather than it should be so presented to unprepared multitudes as that some, however excellent in the ways which the truths they possess have shown them, would be unable to receive this new truth, and harm themselves by its rejection; and others would receive it only to expose it to perversion and profanation. This truth is permitted to find its

way to the hearts and minds of the few who have received it, not because they are better or worse than others, but because they could be helped by it more than by any other truth.

THE ISRAELITISH CHURCH.

Under the guidance of this principle of adaptation, the Israelites were chosen as a race among whom could be established a perfect representative of a Church; but under the protecting veil of a symbolic representation. This was effected by positive revelations, variously but stringently enforced, which, in the tabernacle and temple worship, and in a law and ritual which penetrated into social, family, and daily life, expressed in symbolic language precisely the requirements and the characteristics of a true spiritual Church. These literal expressions signify by correspondence, answering spiritual truths and laws. Then the race was carried through a history which, told for the most part with literal accuracy, expressed in its literal language what in its spiritual correspondence was a spiritual history,—as true of one race as of another, of one time as of another, and of one man as of another. Not that all which is spiritually told there befalls all races and all men, but that nothing can befall any race or any men which does not find its lesson there. It would be impossible, without going too far beyond the scope

and character of this little work, to give these lessons in any detail. That the history of the Israelites has some spiritual meaning has always been seen by all who looked upon the Scriptures as holy. For example, the journey from Egypt to Canaan, the sanctity of the temple and of Mount Zion, are matters frequently referred to in the sermons and religious writings of most Christian sects. In the early ages of Christianity, the spiritual sense of Scripture was generally acknowledged; and some — Origen, for example — labored earnestly to discover and exhibit this sense. But the time had not come when the laws and principles of correspondence could be given; and by them alone can this spiritual sense be made accurate, continuous, and coherent.

For a long succession of ages, the Bible has been protected against the assaults of a purely natural criticism by the reverence which hung about it an impenetrable armor. That time has gone by. Now, reverence for any thing is feeble, and seems to be growing feebler every day. The Bible which, to some persons, is still a most interesting topic of investigation on religious grounds, is to others an interesting topic of inquiry on the most external and purely natural grounds. Learned and able men devote themselves to the work of disproving its inspiration, and exposing what such criticism as theirs holds to be its errors. Its defenders are fee-

ble, however earnest; and it is impossible to deny that the Bible has fallen in men's minds far below its former high estate. The ground taken by modern criticism is, that the Bible must be investigated and criticised, and accepted or rejected as this criticism determines, precisely like any other book, — which would be true if the Bible were like other books; and is just as untrue as that is. It may be that this conclusion has not been generally reached; and certainly it is not by all religious men. But equally certain it is that the Bible seems to be falling under the blows of its adversaries, and needs a new and stronger defence, if any portion of its ancient sanctity is to be restored to it. These late assaults upon it, and this decay of an unreasoning reverence, have been permitted, because means are now given for awakening a reverence for it far deeper than has ever been felt, and of founding this reverence on grounds which the strictest rationality will maintain.

The assaults upon the Bible have been almost wholly on the following grounds: First, that there is not and cannot be any such thing as inspiration, or as an inspired book. Then, the uncertainty as to the authorship and dates of the several books, and of the canon of Scripture. Then, the apparent contradiction by passages of Scripture of the most certain principles of morality, and its imputa-

tion to the Deity of wrath, cruelty, and vengeance. Then, its inconsistencies. And then, the demonstrable inaccuracy of some of its statements. To all these objections an answer can be given, and against them there is now an adequate defence.

As to the first and most general objection, — that there is no such thing as inspiration or an inspired book, — this is an objection which cannot but prevail with all those who do not believe in spirit as a real existence, distinct from matter; that is, with all those whose thoughts are only sensuous thoughts, and whose reason is only a sensuous reason, whether that reason be coarse, rude, and wholly uncultivated, or carried forward to the highest point of external culture and refinement. And to this objection the answer is given by the truths now made known concerning the relation of God to man, and of spirit to matter. As these are understood, inspiration will be understood, and an inspired book be seen to be a communication from God to man, and to the highest reason of man.

As to the uncertainty of the authorship and dates of the several books, so far as we think of it at all, we recognize in it a provision which lessens the tendency to regard the books as merely human books, which would certainly be stronger if the individual writers were well known. The canon of Scripture has greatly fluctuated as to both Testaments. There

is but one standard which can be depended upon. No book contains the Word of God, unless it contains from beginning to end, and in all its parts, a continuous spiritual sense founded on the correspondence between spirit and matter. We should not venture, on our own knowledge of this correspondence, to apply this test rigorously. On this point we accept the statement of Swedenborg, who, on this ground, excludes from the commonly accepted canon of Protestant Scripture, Ruth, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon; and, from the New Testament, the Acts, and all the Epistles.

Of the opposition of some parts of the Bible to a pure morality, and of the imputation to God of the qualities of a bad man, the explanation is to be found in the nature and purpose of the Word, and the method in which that purpose is accomplished. God has spoken that Word to men to lift them up. It addresses them in the very lowest moral and spiritual condition in which they can exist. It speaks to them in a way they can understand, and addresses to them motives by which they can be influenced. For this purpose, God is represented very differently in different places, because He is presented to all as that which their God would be. It is said in Psalm xviii., "With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt

show thyself upright; with the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward." Let a man's disposition be what it may, it will be sure to give color and form to the conception he will have of God from reading the Bible. If he be down in the depths of sinfulness, and his heart and mind are closed against all but the lowest motives, the terror of an angry and avenging God may restrain and help him. If he accepts the help, and is restrained from his evil ways, and gradually grows better, at whatever point of elevation he may reach, he will find, even in the literal sense of the Word, assurances of a gracious Father, of perfect mercy, and unfailing love.

As to the objection to the Bible, founded on the immorality of some of its chief persons, and the savage cruelty of the chosen people, — we reply that this people were chosen that they might exhibit, in their extirpation of the corrupted heathen who then possessed Palestine, the processes, often painful and distressing, by which correspondent corruptions may be extirpated from the heart which they have taken possession of. The inhabitants of Canaan at that time were descendants from the ancient and Hebraic churches, and had reached that fulness of depravity that it was well for them that they should pass away. The Israelites were in their own nature

hard and savage, and were permitted to obey the dictates of their nature, wholly unconscious of what they were representing. Vice and sin of every kind grew by indulgence among all ranks of them, until at length they completed their own work, and brought destruction on the nation. Thus they represented in their whole career, the establishment, the growth, the decay, and the death of a church among men; and not this only, but of the church — or the good and the truth — in every man who afterwards pursues a downward path. These paths are as many and as various as the men who take them; but all are included in this representation.

Perhaps it may be well to show what different construction the spiritual meaning gives to the natural meaning. Let us, in the difficulty of choosing, take almost without choice, as an example, the closing verses of Psalm cxxxvii., in which it is said, “O daughter of Babylon who is to be destroyed, . . . happy he that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.” I have more than once heard this cited as giving great difficulty to those who would see in the Psalms only songs of praise and prayer to a God of love. In the literal sense, these words are full of the most savage cruelty; in the spiritual sense, they describe a blessedness which the best man may well pray for every day of his life. As the whole world of matter corresponds to

the whole world of spirit, so, as has been said, all that is material must correspond either to what belongs to the understanding or to the will; for these two compose and constitute the whole of the spirit, each half being indefinitely diversified. Rocks and stones are perfectly devoid of life, and are among the things which correspond to and represent the things of the understanding; and more especially those truths which are positive, abiding, and fundamental. Thus our Lord speaks of the house that is founded upon a rock, that the floods and the winds assail it in vain; for so it is with the house of faith, — the intellectual structure in which a man makes his home, and which spiritual floods and winds beat upon in vain, if it be founded upon a clear perception and firm belief of the foundation truths upon which all genuine faith must rest. So He said to Peter, “Upon this rock will I build my church,” referring to the truth Peter had just declared, — “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;” for against a church, whether of many or of one, built on this foundation, the gates of hell cannot prevail. Stones are more special truths, of like kind, each of which forbids and rebukes the sin opposed to it; and the power to dash the little ones of the enemies of our souls against the stones is a power from our Heavenly Father to dash the earliest emotions of evil, — the newly-born children of sin, — even in their infancy,

against the truths which expose and defeat them, and take their life away.

All good may be perverted into evil, and all truth into falsity; and there is no evil which is not a perverted good, and no falsity which is not a perverted truth. Hence, most things mentioned in the Scriptures have a twofold significance; in one place representing what is good or true, and in another what is evil or false. Thus stones are often used to represent falsities; as, when our Lord said, "I and my Father are one," the Jews, representing the natural man or mind, "took up stones to stone him." And in the parable in Matthew xiii., and Mark iv., the "stony places" and "stony ground" represent a mind so overstrewn with falsities, that truths sown there could not take abiding root.

That modern criticism has established the opposition between some of the facts stated in the Bible and those which the progress of science has demonstrated, cannot be denied; and some Biblical statements, especially where numbers are concerned, are impossible. To objections of this kind, the answer is that God has not spoken to man to reveal to him either natural science or the history of the race, or of a nation. His purpose was altogether other than this. This has been often said before; but now, and not until now, we can understand the true nature and purpose of the Bible, and the way in which it

accomplishes its purpose. God gives to man, as inherent in his nature, powers entirely adequate in their normal and natural exercise to the gradual acquirement of all knowledge of a natural kind, or needed for this life. God speaks to him in a way that is higher than his nature, to give him truth which he could not otherwise possess; spiritual truth, religious truth, — of which not one particle could come to him any more than it comes to animals, if it did not come to him in a supra-natural way. This spiritual sense or meaning of the Bible is the primary thing. It is preserved at all events and perfectly. By means of the correspondence between spirit and matter, it could be expressed in natural forms which are for the most part literally true, and in this natural form it could come to natural men, and reach their understandings and their hearts. But where this expression was impossible, because no natural forms which were literally true were capable of containing this spiritual sense, there natural forms which were not literally true were of necessity employed. For this spiritual truth is the gift of God to men in every possible condition, even to the highest which created beings can attain, and therefore it is perfect. Our eyes are opened to see it only partially and imperfectly. In coming ages, as the race rises into higher needs and higher capacities, more and yet more of this truth will be seen,

and seen with greater distinctness. The limit is all of it in the seer and none of it in the truth, for infinite truth is condensed and embodied in this literal truth.

Of the Gospels I shall have more to say when I speak of the acts and words of our Lord. The Acts and the Epistles, it has been already stated, are excluded from the canon of the New Testament, because they were not inspired in the sense already given to the word inspiration. They are excellent and valuable writings, containing much religious truth of great importance, and have been useful not only for the truth they contain, but for their protection of the inspired books, by drawing away from them the assaults of a sceptical and hostile criticism, or of a false and pernicious interpretation, which have, in large measure, exhausted themselves upon the Epistles.

The prophetic writings are not everywhere prophecies of the future. In some passages they regard the present; and describe, in words of fearful denunciation, the corruptions prevailing all around the prophet. In others, they threaten calamity and destruction as the doom of transgressors. But in many others they describe, as in a far future, the coming of the Messiah, the establishment of His kingdom, the restoration of Israel, and a reign of peace that is to know no end. This prophecy has always been

referred by Christians to the coming of the Lord. This is well. But in an interior sense it refers to His second coming. So understood, the prophets bear testimony, not only in general but in their details, to the establishment of the New-Church; and to its growth, its character, and its influence, as a whole, and in every mind to which it can find entrance.

The Psalms are quite distinct from any other parts of Scripture. In their literal sense, they are songs of praise and prayer. In their spiritual sense they set forth the spiritual history of our Lord: His temptations, His conflicts, His sufferings, and His victories. Because there is no way to heaven but to take up our cross and follow Him, and this not merely in a general way but most specifically, the Psalms in their spiritual sense are applicable to every man who is seeking to walk in the path which our Saviour trod; and at every step they give him, and always have given him, guidance, strength, and consolation.

Of the book of Job we have already said that it has not a constant and continuous spiritual sense, and therefore is not properly a part of Holy Scripture; nor does Swedenborg say much of it, although he sometimes quotes from it. He tells us that some knowledge of correspondences existed among very ancient races, who had very little of natural science;

and that the book of Job was composed when much of that knowledge remained with the posterity of those races. It may be regarded as a long parable. Under the guise of a good and very wealthy man, who is bereft of every thing, and long and sorely tempted but never overcome, and in the end restored to greater wealth and prosperity,—it narrates the spiritual history of a good man, who is conscious and proud of his goodness, and suddenly awakes to a sense of the taint which lies upon that goodness, and, by long and painful temptation, is brought to a knowledge of his utter wretchedness without God; and when at length, accepting and taking to his heart the truth that all human goodness is the gift of God only, he gives to Him the glory, he is restored to more than his former peace and happiness.

Of the Apococalypse we must say more. Very many have been the efforts to explain this book as a prophecy of external history, by applying its statements to various historical events. These efforts have been utterly vain and useless, for the plain reason that this book refers solely and exclusively to the spiritual history of the Christian Church. After describing the falsities and errors which beset it even in its beginning, it goes on to describe its gradual decay and decline, until its corruption was consummated. It then relates the judgment which took

place in the spiritual world, establishing new heavens, under whose influence a new earth would be created by the descent to earth from heaven of a new church, which is called the New Jerusalem. A great number of details concerning all these topics are specifically set forth. All of these are wholly unintelligible, unless a knowledge of the correspondences in accordance with which the book is composed casts its light upon them. Then they are full of information; not speculative, and not merely general; but intensely practical, and infinitely greater in interest and importance to the well-being of mankind than any prophecy concerning political or external history could be.

There are undoubtedly some passages in the Word to which, if they are regarded only in the literal sense, it is difficult to attach any meaning; and many, especially in the historical narratives, to which it is impossible to attach any religious meaning, if they are so regarded. But these were necessary to the continuity and completeness of the spiritual sense. There is also much—indeed, nearly all the ritualistic portion of the Old Testament—which has no longer obligatory force or application in the literal sense. But all these portions—as will be seen when their correspondences are known—contain in their spiritual sense instruction of inestimable value. And

there are other passages, in which the spiritual sense shines forth with its own light, imparting a sublimity to which none can be dead but those who are wholly blinded by sense or sin. Swedenborg compares these passages to the face which is not clothed, and in which the character shines forth unveiled.

Let it not be supposed for a moment that the belief in the spiritual sense of the Bible has the slightest tendency to depreciate the literal sense. On the contrary, a firm belief that it is the basis, the continent, and the expression of a heavenly and an infinite sense gives to it new force and sanctity. The commandments therein set forth are the words of God to man, given to guide him to happiness and to heaven. In their literal sense, they are addressed to him in his lowest and most external condition. But this is a condition which no man can ever pass through in such wise that it no longer belongs to him. Among the heresies which have darkened the Christian Church, have been some which permitted men to believe that they could rise to so lofty a spiritual state that the natural or external became utterly unimportant, and that it was then safe for them to disregard the commandments of the Word, and to indulge their lusts. What truth can more effectually rebuke this terrible falsity than that which teaches us that internal goodness (if it were possible) without a corresponding life, would be a soul

without a body, an essence without a form, — a mere impossibility!

Gladly would I close this most imperfect view of the Bible with fitting words; but I have none such. How can the words of man speak adequately of the Word of God? For the Bible is that, in no poetical way, and by no figure of speech, but with a reality which surpasses all other reality. Not to men only upon earth is it spoken; but when they leave this lowest life and ascend to heaven, even to the Heaven of heavens, they find it there also, — the Word of God to men: ascending in its meaning as they ascend, and ever in its inmost infinitely above them, and ever bringing down from His infinitude and His blessedness light and life to His children.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LORD.

THEY who can form any conception of the incarnation of God the Father, in Jesus Christ, whether they believe it or not, may see that it must be, if true, the central fact of Divine Providence,—for which every thing that preceded it prepared, and from which every thing which follows it proceeds. They may see, too, that any comprehension of this fact must be, if not founded upon, assisted by some general understanding of the laws and order and purposes of Divine Providence, and of a personal immortality or a spiritual existence after life in this world has terminated.

Nothing of all this can be clearly understood without some knowledge of the doctrine of ownhood, or of *proprium*, as I have elsewhere called it. This has already been referred to, and must be repeatedly referred to; for I deem it fundamental to all truth that relates to Divine Providence. Of this doctrine I will endeavor again to make such a statement as seems necessary in connection with the subject of this chapter.

God loves infinitely; He *is* Love. It is the essence of love to desire to give whatever it has or is—to give itself—to an object which must be other than itself, or outside of itself.

To satisfy this desire God created and creates whatever exists; and so created and creates every thing, that it shall be other than Himself or outside of Himself.

And yet He cannot but create every thing from Himself. His infinite and perfect love would move him to do this: nor could He otherwise create, for whatever is created only of nothingness would consist only of nothingness; nor can we believe this, or indeed think it. We can think He caused thoughts or affections which belonged to His being to be embodied and existent outside of Himself, and that thus an external universe came into being. This, however, is an inadequate expression of the fact. So must any of our words be. Nor can we ever comprehend fully and adequately the method of creation. But something we may know and comprehend about it; and all of this knowledge may grow in quantity and in clearness for ever. Now, all that I venture to say is, that God creates the universe from Himself and of Himself.

But love requires an object out of itself, or other than itself. If God continually creates the universe from Himself and of Himself, how can it satisfy His

infinite desire for an object of His love, which object must be other than Himself? It is precisely this question which this doctrine of *proprium* answers.

He gives to the universe He creates to be itself. He gives to it ownhood of itself, or *proprium*, that it may be itself and not God; and so may be other than Him, while created of and from Him, and an object of His love. He does not cause it to be other than Himself by creating it apart, and infusing into it a certain measure of life or energy or force, and impressing upon it certain laws in accordance wherewith this force shall continue to operate, and then letting it alone to go on of itself. With Him there is no time. He gives us the idea of time to satisfy a necessity of our finite nature; and it is difficult for us to think even of Him and His work without time. But we are capable of seeing clearly that with Him there is no time, and that His work of creation is a constant and ever-present work. And as He creates by perpetual creation, He always imparts to His creation to be itself; and so other than Him, even while its being and all that constitutes its being are incessantly derived from Him.

The universe consists of dead matter and of living creatures. All of it and all things in it are the objects of His care. But only living creatures can receive from Him happiness; and all that is not

living is for the sake of what is living, and is instrumental in enabling Him to give them happiness. But what is happiness? This word expresses a feeling which cannot be defined. We may use other words, more or less synonymous, but they do not define it. It needs no definition. All men know what it is, for it is that which all men know that they desire. In form it is infinitely diversified, and so it is in measure. But all forms and all measures of it are, like life, — which is equally diversified in form and measure, — derived from one source, one infinite happiness, which is the happiness of God. Of this, which is His own happiness, He imparts to all His creatures in the form and measure in which they are capable of receiving it. Only where there is life is there happiness; and in created life, only in its highest form, — only in human life, — is there a consciousness of happiness.

Only to men does He give this consciousness of happiness; but He also gives to men much more than this. He gives to them selfhood, *proprium*, — ownership of themselves and of their life in a far higher sense than that in which He gives this to any other of His creatures. And *therefore* He gives to them the power of determining for themselves the kind and the measure of the happiness which they will make themselves capable of receiving from Him.

In Him, in life in its origin and in itself, happiness is an element of life, and is one with life. The gift of *proprium*, and of the free will or power of self-determination which flows from it, is given to man not only because Infinite Love must have objects out of itself, and could not otherwise have such objects, but because, by means of this gift, the highest possible measure of happiness may be given to those of His creatures who possess this freedom of the will; that is, to human beings. For that greatest happiness is the happiness of working with Him by choice and as of themselves, to build themselves up into the possibility of a likeness with Him, which admits of conjunction with Him; and of the perpetual and eternal growth of this likeness and this conjunction, which is at every step the result of God's working and man's free coöperation with God.

As man cannot have one particle of goodness or truth unless God gives them to him, so He cannot give them to man unless man accepts them. And man may accept the gifts of God, and utterly pervert them. He may receive from God that which should be truth in his understanding and good in his affection, and, by the abuse of his power of self-determination, he may make it falsity and evil.

It has been already said that man has no consciousness that he lives from God, or that his

thoughts and affections are other than self-derived; and he begins life with no other consciousness than that his life is his own. Soon the difference between right and wrong becomes known to him. Then, if he chooses good rather than evil, he believes not only that the power of choice which he exerts is his own, which is true, but that this power belongs to and is derived from his own nature, which is false. This is, however, a falsehood which then may do no harm; for it is necessary that he should so begin his human consciousness that his selfhood, or free-will, or *proprium*, may be complete and unimpaired. But so long as he so believes, his choosing good in act has less power to make him good in spirit; for it tends to nourish self-love, self-pride, and self-contentment,—all of which are the opposites of good. There is but one real good, and that is godlikeness; for only that tends to make him capable of conjunction with God. Hence, from near the beginning of his consciousness, influences around him and within him endeavor to open his mind gradually to the truth, and to lead his will to the good which belongs to that truth. The idea of God is soon presented to him. Then other religious truths; those which, as the Commandments, tell him to avoid doing those things which would darken his thoughts and corrupt his affections. These truths are taught him in various ways, and with progressive increase

and elevation in their character, if he profits by them, always being adapted by perfect wisdom to his capacities, that he may make use of them; and always rising and growing as his capacities grow by his reception of these truths in his understanding and his will, and his incorporating them into his life. By these means, and at every step forwards, his *proprium* or selfhood is vivified with a true life, and regenerated. Whenssoever he rejects or abuses the means of this improvement thus given him, his *proprium* or selfhood remains what it originally was, and that is only self-love, which, when unchecked and uncontrolled, is the source and origin of all evil; and therefore his *proprium* remains only self-love, or only and altogether evil, and all that he thinks or feels or does from it is evil and only evil. Therefore also truth is never given him such in form or in measure that he cannot receive it, or, if he receives, must reject or pervert it; but always only such that he may receive it if he will, and may profit by it if he will.

The same law or principle of order, by which Divine Providence is governed in reference to individual men, governs this Providence also as to all men or the race. From the beginning, God came down to men always in forms and in measures perfectly suited to their capacities and needs. At first, by revelations and influences of which we know but

little, and only as we gather that from the first chapters of Genesis, when their spiritual meaning is disclosed by the science of correspondence. Then followed successive revelations, and churches built upon them. To the Jewish Church was given a written Word. It was given, not to this church only, but to mankind; and will endure as long as mankind. It is adapted, even in its literal sense, to all men in all ages. To those who are only natural, it speaks in tones of command, — prohibiting sin and threatening disobedience with the consuming wrath of an Omnipotent God. To those capable of receiving into the understanding, heart, and life, higher truths, they are given even in the literal sense; and such men have always found them there. These truths are all expressed under natural forms; but these natural forms clothed spiritual forms, by virtue of that correspondence between spiritual things and natural things, which causes all natural things to exist as the effects of their spiritual causes.

At length, more could be done for mankind. He who had heretofore given them of His truth and His influence through all these instrumentalities, came down Himself; came to man in a human body and in a human nature; was born and grew and lived as a man among men, — Inmanuel, God with us, — through the years of one generation.

There is no life but His life. Whenever concep-

tion takes place in a mother's womb, it is because life from Him, through the child's father, and therefore modified and limited by that father, came down and vivified the seed in the mother. But to the virgin Mary life came directly from Him who is Life; for He Himself, without any instrumental medium, vivified the seed in Mary's womb, and Jesus Christ was conceived and born of a virgin.

In assuming a human body and a human nature, He assumed a human *proprium*; that *proprium*, ownhood, or selfhood, which has been repeatedly spoken of. For what purpose and with what effect He assumed this *proprium*, I will endeavor to state.

It may well seem an idle thing, or worse than idle, to attempt to fathom the designs of the Omniscient and Almighty. But, thanks to His infinite mercy, it is not impossible for us to see with some clearness some part of His infinite purpose. We venture, therefore, to say that the incarnation of our Lord may be considered under five heads:—

1. The redemption of mankind.
2. The bringing of the spiritual world into order.
3. The making of the assumed humanity Divine.
4. The providing thereby of a new medium for saving influence.
5. The giving to mankind for evermore a definite object of intelligent faith, of worship, and of love.

THE REDEMPTION OF MANKIND.

Any presentation of the working of Divine Providence which supposes that He works according to a certain plan and method, and makes use of means and instruments, and advances slowly, step by step, — is open to the objection that it forgets His Omniscience and Omnipotence, and likens Him to man in a way that degrades Him. It will be said that He who knows every thing needs not to grope His way through experiments and by circuitous paths; and that He who can do what He will needs not to employ instruments or methods, nor to approach gradually the end that He would reach. All this is for man to do. He who has all knowledge and all power has but to will, and it is; as when God said “Be light,” and “light was.”

This objection has great weight with many minds; more perhaps than they are aware of. The obvious and immediate answer, that in point of fact growth and movement by steps, and by instruments, is the way and method of divine action, in all we see and know of it, does not satisfy them. The fact is undisputable. The whole universe, and all its parts and operations, proves and illustrates this fact or law. And not only does the dead universe prove it, but the universe of mind as well. Every thing that lives acts by its instrument, and if by no

other instrument than by its body, which is its instrument. Nothing marks the elevation of man above all lower animals, more than the variety and multiplicity of the instruments which he uses. And gradual progress is another universal fact, for the law of life is growth, and when that ceases decay begins, and death approaches. Not more certain is it, that the babe grows through childhood and youth into manhood, than that the mind grows also, and in every hour of its growth, or every step of its progress, makes use of means and instruments that it may grow. Nor, is this more true of the individual than of the race. Age follows age; there is much alternation, — apparent advance being followed by apparent retreat; and advance in some places is accompanied by retreat in others. Events occur which promote advance, and then those which cause retreat; and not unfrequently those circumstances which seemed to promise advance or threaten retreat are utterly falsified by the actual result. But through it all, and as the common resultant of it all, the race does grow, and does go forward.

Either, then, there is no God, — or He has left this world to take care of itself, — or else this method of action, by successive steps, by the use of diversified instrumentalities, and in ways suited to varying conditions and needs, is the universal law

of Divine action. If it be so, any method of promoting the salvation of mankind, which has not this character, would stand in exact opposition to all that we know, and all we might expect from what we know of Divine Providence.

This answer, however, to the objection above stated would tend rather to silence than to satisfy it. There is a better answer. Because this is the method of Divine action, to man can be given the blessing of using the instruments which God provides, and of unending advancement in goodness and in the happiness of working with God.

Before going farther, let me advert to a mistake on which rests much of the unwillingness to consider the Almighty as working step by step, and upon a definite plan or method. This mistake is, that there are no limits to the power of God; whereas there is a sense in which, or an aspect under which, this power is limited; for it is self-limited by the Divine love and wisdom. God *can* do nothing which He does not desire because it is the best thing for his creatures. He *can* do nothing which He does not see to be the best way of promoting that result. The Divine omnipotence is the willing and obedient servant of the Divine love and wisdom. Herein we see one of the instances of the likeness of man to God. For what can be more obvious, than that we grow in Godlikeness, or god-

liness, in the measure in which the strength we have is the willing and obedient servant of whatever love and wisdom there may be in us?

Let us again refer to the fact, that while God creates the universe constantly and incessantly, and always from Himself, He so creates it that it shall always be itself, or other than Him; and should always and in all things, small or great, act as of itself.

The first and perpetual effect is, that man, for whom the universe is, and to whom it is always accommodated, adjusted, and adapted by correspondence, — man must always do his part of the work in all that God does for him, wherein man can work. Innumerable, yea, infinite, are the things which God does for him, wherein he does and can do nothing; as in all that belongs to his infancy and immaturity, and in various circumstances of his life and condition. All these things, however, have but one end; and that is, to lead and help him, by all the aid which Omnipotence can yield, freely to accept the blessing offered him, and in the exercise of his own free will, and by the strength given him to that end, do what there is for him to do, that this blessing may be his. It can be his only, on the condition that he thus coöperates with God. He could not so coöperate, unless his free agency or free self-determination in spiritual things were perfectly pre-

served; and therefore it is preserved. And thus, while he is perfectly and instantly dependent upon God, he is always himself. In the measure in which we understand this truth or law, we shall find it easier to understand the mystery of life. And let us endeavor to cast the light of this truth upon the redemption of man by the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ.

Life flows into man in two ways: immediately and mediately. That which flows into him from God immediately, forms the basis of his life. It flows into the inmost of his being, and does not reach his consciousness. That which flows into him mediately, comes to him through angels and spirits. They who are most like him are nearest to him by the law of affinity. The life which flows through them is modified by them, and is thereby suited to him because they are like him, and are brought into connection with him by this resemblance; not by a blind law, for this influent life is always controlled by our Father, and made to be the best for him which it can be. This life forms and constitutes the whole of his conscious life. He would have no consciousness of being, no feeling, no thought, no action, and no character, but for this mediate life. It must be suited to him, that it may become his; and it is suited to him by those through whom it flows to him, because they are like to him. They are many. They

are good so far as he has any thing of good in him to bring the good near to him ; they are evil so far as he has evil in his character to bring evil spirits near to him. And in this way every thing in him which lives is vivified.

But not every thing within him is thus vivified. Far, very far more of that which is in him is never brought forth into his consciousness. They must have little experience or knowledge of themselves, who do not know what it is to find some trait or tendency which was wholly unexpected brought into consciousness and activity. "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?" has been the indignant exclamation of many who afterwards found themselves doing just that thing. There is no one of us who would not be amazed and shocked, could he see all the proclivities to evil which are in him by a long inheritance. But it is here that the goodness and wisdom of Providence come in especially. These proclivities do us no harm, and are not really a part of us or of our living self, while they remain latent and suppressed. And our Father so controls the influent life by which we live, that no evil tendency shall be called forth, which it is beyond our power to resist and overcome. But why, we may ask, does not His mercy, by a similar control, prevent any tendency to evil from acquiring vitality within us? Nor is there any answer to this ques-

tion, excepting so far as we understand and remember that Providence places our character in our own hands, and we are gifted with the power of preparing for eternal happiness, by building up, as of ourselves, a character receptive thereof. Nor can we do this in any other way than by resisting and putting away from us, as of ourselves, an evil tendency, and then the love of the opposite good flows in, and is appropriated — or added to our *proprium* — and becomes a part of ourselves. Unless we do something of this, we do not take one step in the path of happiness; and the more of this we do, the farther we advance in this path.

That we may do this, our free-will is perfectly preserved. The influences by which we live are so balanced and equilibrated that we stand between them, living from them, and yet free: free to turn to the right or to the wrong; free to accept and appropriate and make our own the good or the evil that are within our reach; free “to choose this day whom we will serve,” — and every day of our lives we make that choice.

Good spirits have no desire to disturb this equilibrium, or coerce us in any way. They know that upon the rightful exercise of our free-will depends our happiness. Evil spirits seek nothing more than to fetter this free-will, and coerce us into evil; for that will bring us into servitude to them. And now

we come to the great fact which made the incarnation of our Lord necessary.

All conscious life comes to men through those in the spiritual world. Evil men become evil spirits, and the life which flows through them is evil. This evil life is equilibrated in the manner already stated. But the amount and strength of evil had gradually so increased in the spiritual world that this equilibrium had become difficult; and, if the same increase of evil had gone on, would have become impossible. Then would the free-will of mankind have perished, and with it all the hope of eternal happiness. Mankind were made captive by the enemies of their souls, and were passing under a bondage from which there would be no escape. From this captivity, from this bondage, our Lord came to redeem them. And in coming as He did come, He only pursued to its end the path He had ever followed in enabling and assisting men to work out their salvation.

Heretofore, from the beginning, truth had been given to men to help them in their combat with evil. It always came from the Divine wisdom; it always was that wisdom accommodated to man. A word is the expression of a thought. The Divine Word is the form and expression of the Divine wisdom. Always it was the Word of God which taught men how to escape from the hell within

themselves, — the hell of self-love. It had come in many forms; it had come in many revelations; it had come as a written Word. But now, in man's greatest need, it came itself to men.

Let it not for a moment be supposed that the Divine wisdom came alone, or separated from the Divine love. With God, this is impossible. In man, as we all know, truth and goodness, the understanding and the will, are separated, and sometimes far apart. For we all know what it is to love that which the understanding rebukes, and have no love for that which it approves and enjoins. The will and the understanding, which are vessels for and instruments of love and wisdom, are separated and opposed when the will seeks and enjoys that which the understanding condemns.

In God, love and wisdom exist together in a perfect unity. They are separated in man during his life on earth, but that life is given him to bring them again into unity. This is done when the understanding succeeds in bringing the will, first into acknowledgment, then into obedience, and then into love for that which the understanding knows to be good. They are brought into unity also when an evil will subdues the understanding into agreement with itself, and, by its seductions, causes the understanding to see as good and to call good the evil things — the worldliness and selfishness —

which the unregenerated will loves. Blessed is he whom truth has taught the way of goodness, and who has followed that way until his will and understanding have become one in the knowledge and the love of good.

In God, love and wisdom are perfectly and absolutely one. The wisdom is always the guide, the expression, and the instrument of the love, and the love always the only motive force of the wisdom. Always, in the earliest, the later, and the latest action and manifestation of the Word, or of the wisdom of God, His love was in His wisdom as its source and life. For the Word was always with God, and was always God, and without it was nothing made (or done) which was made. In the Word made flesh, the Infinite and Divine love, and the Infinite and Divine wisdom, were together as one; and as one became flesh by assuming a human nature from the virgin Mary.

If it be asked how we can hope that a finite mind can be lifted to a conception or to an intellectual belief of an infinite, and therefore inexpressible and inconceivable, fact,—the answer is, that here also God has revealed Himself, not in His Word only, but in His work; and even in ourselves has so placed His image, that we gain from it some knowledge even of Him. Whatsoever thing a man has ever done, he did because some desire or affection

moved him to do it, and caused a thought of how to do it; and when it was done, the affection and the thought met together in the act. Were there no affection, there would be no motive power; were there no thought, the motive power could not act; and only in the act could both come forth and be. From this faint image of the Infinite, we may look up, not wholly without light, even to the Infinite itself, — although the image is as far from its prototype as earth is from heaven; but earth reflects the forms of heaven.

Thus the Word made flesh was God with us, — Immanuel. He was a man, conceived within a human mother, and born of a human mother. But within that assumed humanity there was God Himself.

The Word was made flesh by the impregnation of a virgin. We have already said, that, whenever a human child begins to live, life through its father impregnates the ovum in its mother; and the child grows, and is born. But, in the case of our Lord, life came to the mother directly, and not through any human father.

When a man is regenerated, it is by resisting and overcoming the proclivities to evil, which belong to his inherited nature. Precisely so it was with our Lord; but with this difference. No evil spirits are permitted to have access to any man, and waken any

of his inherited proclivities to evil, excepting those which he may, if he will, resist and subdue. Precisely so was it with our Lord; but with this difference. In any man, the life which is his came to him through a human father, and was modified by this transmission; his power of resisting and subduing his evils is thereby modified and limited, and the evils which present themselves to his consciousness are those only which this limited power is adequate to subdue. But the life within our Lord was infinite, possessing all power; therefore all the evil tendencies in the nature inherited from the mother came forth into consciousness and conscious effort, because the life within was strong enough to resist them all, and overcome them all: and it did resist, subdue, and extirpate all of them.

With every man, the evil tendencies which awaken within him, and tempt him to sin in thought, affection, or act, are animated by evil spirits in whom those very evils have become their life. If he resists in these temptations, if he overcomes in these conflicts, he overcomes these evil spirits, and lessens and at length destroys their power to do him harm.

Precisely so was it with our Lord; but with this difference. The evil spirits by whom He was tempted, and whom He overcame, were the whole company of evil spirits; for all the powers of hell were permitted to rise up against Him; in His

mother, Mary, were by long inheritance germs of all possible evil, and the work which our Lord came to do, He could therefore do completely. All of these evil spirits He conquered, and conquered perfectly; and all of them He reduced into such order, that never thereafter should they exert an overpowering influence upon man, or any influence beyond what might subserve his best interests in bringing to his knowledge and within his reach the sinful tendencies which he might overcome, — and thus giving him the means and opportunity of removing from himself those hindrances which opposed the good influences that seek to give him the life of heaven.

Thus our Lord became our Redeemer. Thus He redeemed us from slavery to sin, and bondage to evil and unhappiness.

It is common to consider redemption and salvation as the same thing. It is not so. Redemption makes salvation possible. It supplies the means, and gives the opportunity of securing salvation; it gives salvation to all who will make use of those means, and profit by that opportunity. Redemption is an accomplished fact, and is universal. Salvation comes to all who are willing to profit by their redemption, and accept the offer of salvation. Redemption means the deliverance from all those influences which would have made our salvation

impossible. Salvation means an escape from sin by our acceptance of, and coöperation with, the Divine effort to save us.

Again it may be asked, Why has an Omniscient and Omnipotent Being taken this indirect and circuitous method of accomplishing His purpose, instead of reaching this result at once by the exercise of His Sovereign will? And, again, we refer to this gift of man to himself, to this *proprium* or ownhood of life, without which man would not be man, for he would lose all that distinguishes and characterizes his nature. It may help us to believe that this work of redemption was done in the manner we have attempted to describe, if we remember that man alone can sin. To him alone among the creatures of God is this fearful power given. For man alone can choose between good and evil, and his choice of evil makes sin. Man alone can resist sin and put it away. For he alone can choose between good and evil, and his choice of good resists sin and puts it away. Human nature alone can be defiled with sin; and only in and by human nature can this defilement be cleansed away.

So has our Lord created us; so has He created human nature. He has made it to be itself, its own. He has given it power to do its own work; and that it might do this fully, that its choice of good might be its own and entirely its own, He has so formed

it, that only by and through human nature can the work of resisting evil and choosing good be done. Therefore, our Lord Himself assumed this human nature, that in it, by it, and through it, He might contend against and overcome and put away all evil; which work, even He could not do in any other way. There have been those who, oppressed by the magnitude of this fact, have held that it was all unreal, not a fact, but only an appearance. They were terribly mistaken. It was the greatest reality in heaven or in earth. He, the Infinite and Eternal, was born of a woman, and lay in the manger in Bethlehem, — a babe, — a human babe. From this humble infancy He grew into childhood, youth, and manhood. And in His human nature, from the power it derived from the Almighty within, He resisted all the tendencies to evil of this nature, and contended with and overcame the evil spirits who animated these evils and brought them into His consciousness, and strove to bring them into will and act.

He conquered them; and by this victory He wrought the redemption of mankind.

THE BRINGING OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD INTO ORDER.

It will be recollected as a part of this statement, that all our conscious life comes to us through those in the spiritual world, who are brought near to us by

affinity or resemblance; that we neither think nor love nor do evil, except from the influence of those who, finding in us the germ of the evil which has reached its maturity in them, animate that germ with their own life; that, at the time of the coming of our Lord, our enemies had become so numerous and strong, that it had become difficult, and would have become impossible, so to balance their evil influences with good influences as to leave our spiritual freedom unimpaired. By our Lord's victories over these evil spirits, our redemption was wrought; and, that it might be complete, all the powers of darkness and of death were permitted to assail Him, and all were conquered.

These conflicts or temptations, and the sufferings attendant upon them, grew even to the end. They were like those which men suffer from like causes, with the exception repeatedly made before, that they were boundless and unlimited; they were *all*, of which no man can know more than a part. We cannot conceive of them adequately; but, that we may not be wholly ignorant, we have the story of Gethsemane. In this we have a picture of the sharpest agony that man ever endured; for where else was it ever seen that a human mind could be tortured, until the sweat fell from the brow in drops of blood?

It is commonly supposed that His suffering in Geth-

semane arose from His anticipation of what was awaiting Him in Calvary. But this supposition does Him fearful injustice. How many of his followers went rejoicingly to a similar but more protracted and painful death! No. The suffering in that garden was from conflicts at that moment going on within Him. When, in His intolerable distress, perfect patience for a moment gave way, and He said, "Let this cup pass from me,"—it was the cup He was at that moment drinking. He drank it all. They crucified Him, and He died *on* the cross; but he did not die *from* the cross. Capital punishment by crucifixion was well known and often practised in those days, nor is it now wholly unknown in the East. Different writers, ancient and modern, tell us about it. The nails did not pierce a vital organ, and a crucified person who was not interfered with usually lived from three to seven days. Our Lord hung on the cross six hours, and then gave up the ghost. The two who were crucified with Him were alive when the soldiers came, and were put to death. What then did our Lord die of? He died because the intensity of His spiritual suffering laid at last upon his physical frame a heavier burden than it could bear. He died of intolerable agony.

It may be that there are few in these days who can form any conception of this kind of suffering.

It has not been so always. There have been those who have felt and have manifested from similar conflicts, an extremity of distress which shattered the mind and convulsed the body. Here, as so often elsewhere, we have but to enlarge indefinitely a thing of human experience to reach a higher experience. That our redemption might be accomplished, all the powers of evil were permitted to assail Him. They were conquered; but more than that was necessary, that our redemption might be permanent and perpetual. It was necessary that these evil spirits from whom all evil influences come, should be so disposed of, so arranged, and so circumstanced, that never, or very seldom and only for a time, should there be an irruption from the abode of the false and the evil, of force enough to break down man's will.

When we speak of the people of the spiritual world as undergoing some process of disposition and arrangement which should have a material and permanent effect upon their condition and their power, we encounter the difficulty arising from the prevailing dimness and feebleness of the belief that there are any such people, or, as a matter of fact, any other world but this. A mind in such a state can scarcely believe that words have any meaning which describe that world as most real, and as having inhabitants who are men and women still,

and subject to various changes of condition, some slow and gradual, some rapid and sudden, much as it is in this world. Yet even this must be believed, if we would understand at all the effect of our Lord's life and death on earth, in establishing new order in the spiritual world.

THE MAKING OF THE ASSUMED HUMANITY DIVINE.

The conflict and agony endured by our Lord was a conflict between the immeasurable evil of the assumed humanity and the perfect good within. It belonged to and was felt in that human nature. Again, we must refer to our own experience as men, to help us to form some conception of this. Every one who has resisted any evil thought or wish in himself, must know that something within him, something higher than his lower nature, opposed and resisted the tendencies of this lower nature. He must know that he himself consisted, if we may so speak, of two natures, — one lower and more external than the other, to which all the influences of sense and self and worldliness had access, and the other higher and more internal, in which better thoughts and better feelings prevailed. He must know, if much conflict between what is worse and what is better has taught him the lesson, that these two are so distinct that he may look upon himself as in some sense two men, — a natural man and a

spiritual man. And not only his own experience, but his observation of all around him, teaches him that what the whole man becomes depends upon the issue of this conflict: natural, if the lower nature prevails and suppresses or silences the higher nature, which would rebuke and reform the lower; spiritual, if this higher nature prevails in the conflict, and succeeds in subduing the impulses of the lower, and these grow weaker and less urgent until their power disappears, and they are suppressed.

Carry this conception upwards, as far as our limited faculties permit, and it will help us to understand the effect of our Lord's temptations and victories. It will help us, too, to understand how He spake and acted differently in these two states. At times, when that which was only natural was urgent and prominent, He spake as a suffering man, and of the Father as distinct and afar from Him; when the conflict had ended in victory, He spake of the Father as one with Him. At one time appearing to the disciples as distraught with the agony of Gethsemane, and at another as glorified with the glory of the Father, as on the mount of transfiguration. These conflicts and victories were constant, and covered the whole ground. He cleansed His assumed human nature perfectly from defilement, from every thing belonging to it which opposed the divine within. It was full of all evil,

and all this evil He expelled ; and as the evil passed away, the opposite good, divine good, took its place. He brought this lower nature into perfect harmony, into oneness, with the divine within. The human nature became glorified ; without ceasing to be human, it became a divine nature. He was at once perfect Man and perfect God.

THEREBY WAS PROVIDED A NEW MEDIUM FOR
SAVING INFLUENCE.

In this divine-human nature, God has a new and nearer access to us in our human nature. He always works by instruments or means, and we can see, dimly if not clearly, that, excepting by instruments or media of some kind, the Infinite could not reach and act upon the finite. Many are the instruments he has used and is using, — as many as the things He has created and creates ; but by His incarnation and His union of His assumed humanity with His essential divinity, He has a new instrument perfectly adjusted to our human needs ; for while it is divine with the essential Divinity, it is human in the Divine external. The nature which He assumed is our nature, and the proclivities to evil, which in that nature He resisted and subdued, are our proclivities to evil. If we would resist our own proclivities to evil, we must follow His example, and resist them as he resisted them. There is no

other way. And, while we acknowledge His omniscience and perfect love, we may think that in every step of the way, — in every effort, every pain, every trial, in the dark hours of temptation, in the darker hours when despair is drawing near, — He is with us in His divine-human experience, and with His divine-human sympathy. All that, too, He has known; for His trials and His sufferings include all trial, and all suffering.

In all our conflicts with the enemies of our souls, it is He who fights for us and in us, even as He fought against those same enemies when He stood on earth. By His victory over them He reduced them to order, so that they could never more assail us with a strength He could not enable us to resist, as of ourselves and in our own freedom. More He did not do. He did not take from us the necessity of doing our part, because He loved us too well to take from us the blessing that comes, when we do our part. It is only His strength that fights the battle, but He gives this strength to us to be our own, if we are willing to accept it, and make use of it; for we, too, must fight that battle, as of ourselves. We are fighting for life; we must conquer or die: and in all the days or years we pass in this world this battle is going on, although we know it not. This is the battle between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood, between good and

evil. The power to choose comes only from Him ; but He gives us this power, and our choice is our own. Over us His infinite goodness is watching, exactly adapting all the circumstances of life to our spiritual needs, bringing to us every day in the form of that day's duty the means by which we may advance along the path He trod. He helps us always with a power which cannot fail, and leads us always with a wisdom which cannot mistake, but which we are often utterly incapable of comprehending. And He leaves it always to us, to choose whether we will reject His mercies, or accept them in the only way in which we can accept them ; and that is, by doing the duty of each day, in the strength He gives us, and with the acknowledgment that it is His strength, given to us, by which we do it.

Mankind has reached a point in human progress, at which it is given us to know, if we will, that we live from God, constantly and in the highest and most absolute sense ; that we depend upon Him for life, and for all the thought and feeling and power which constitute life, instantly, incessantly, and perfectly ; that He is ever doing all that infinite love can prompt, and all that perfect wisdom can discern, to make our destiny a happy one. But that, nevertheless, He has placed our destiny in our own hands.

Perhaps ages must elapse before the human mind

can be so far cleansed from its obstructions and defilements, that this central truth of man's ownhood of his life, which perfectly reconciles the omnipotence of God and our perfect dependence upon Him, with our perfect freedom; which reconciles His omniscience and almightiness with the necessity and efficacy of our Lord's life and death on earth, — before this truth can be seen with entire fulness and clearness. But so far as it is seen, it stands in the mind as indeed a central truth. From it radiates light into all the departments of thought which concern themselves with the relations of God with man, or with the laws of being in this life or in the other. Resting upon it we may have doctrines on all these subjects, which illuminate the sorrow, the danger, and the mystery of life. Unspeakable the hope and consolation, the trust and peace they offer when pain and peril press upon us most heavily. They solve hard questions of duty, and fall as sunshine upon the pathway that leads to heaven and to God.

THE GIVING TO MANKIND FOR EVERMORE A DEFINITE OBJECT OF INTELLIGENT FAITH, OF WORSHIP, AND OF LOVE.

Throughout this work I have assumed the immortality of man, and the existence of God. The system of Swedenborg would have much to say, if these

fundamental truths were disputed. But they are topics by themselves, and I have thought it best not to enter upon any direct investigation of them in this sketch. One reason is, that I suppose them to be generally and almost universally believed in some form or other, and have therefore confined myself to some attempts to rectify and improve this belief. But they who hold it in any form whatever would probably admit that a correct knowledge of God, and just views of His nature and action, if it were possible to attain to them, would have a vast importance, not only in this life, but during the whole of that immortality. The religious philosophy I am attempting to exhibit goes still farther. It asserts that the whole condition of every man through eternity is governed and determined by his relation, or the relation of his thoughts and affections, to God. We are told by our Lord, that the first and greatest commandment is to love God. This, like every commandment in the Word, is not merely a positive requirement, but it is a revelation. It discloses to us the truth, that our love to God measures our capacity of happiness; that the entire absence of this love implies the entire absence of that capacity; and that the quality of that love determines the quality of our happiness. Hence, from the very beginning, it has been the constant endeavor of Divine Providence to give to men this

knowledge and this love, so far as it was possible for men to receive them in freedom, and give them a cordial welcome.

All the earlier revelations, however they began, ended in idolatry. This was permitted, because even this was always better than no recognition and no worship of a being or beings above men. And while in many instances this idolatry ran to extremes which were awful in their wickedness, we have also much reason to believe that through them a light shone upon many minds, which suggested, sometimes to the intellect, perhaps oftener to the heart, a belief in and a love for a Supreme, Almighty Father.

Through many fluctuations, far more than history takes note of, there was on the whole a gain or enlargement of the human capacity for truth and goodness, even from the first existence of mankind, when they lived only as animals live. These fluctuations were inevitable. Every revelation of truth became dim, and every church founded upon these revelations ran through its course of morning, noon, and night. For every revelation, like every spiritual gift of God, was given to and submitted to man's freedom. We may liken the whole course of Divine Providence to the advancing and retreating waves of a rising tide; or, better, to the tide that rises and falls back, but is ever slowly but surely

gaining on the shore, on which it seems to break ineffectually. So the influence of truth and of good has been slowly but surely gaining upon the indurated self-love, the natural *proprium* of mankind. And, as they gained, new and larger gifts, making still greater gains possible, could be and therefore were given to mankind.

A step of vast importance was taken, when a written word was given. But a further step of infinitely greater moment was taken, when our Lord came upon earth. And then the Gospels were written, containing His words and acts. Then the Apocalypse was written, containing little literal truth, but in its spiritual meaning disclosing the spiritual history of Christianity, — thus completing the Word of God. Nothing more remained but that second coming of the Lord, His coming in the Spirit, which was distinctly intimated in the Gospels, and of which the Apocalypse of St. John is, in its spiritual sense, a perfectly definite prophecy.

Our Lord was a man; certainly He was a man. But there was that in His words and works which distinctly indicated that He was a divine person; and when one of His disciples called Him, "My Lord and my God," He accepted this address. During the first centuries, He was worshipped as divine by all; for those most earnest to find in the

early centuries a denial of His divinity have wholly failed. He was regarded as a manifestation of the Father, as Himself divine; and was not unfrequently called or spoken of as God. At first, there was little effort to determine His relation to the Father, beyond the accepted phrase, "Son of God." But at length, some three centuries after His death, these inquiries took definite shape; and then the controversy between Arius and Athanasius arose. At the Council of Nice, in the year 325, it was determined in favor of Athanasius; and what was called the heresy of Arius was condemned. The essence of that heresy was, that Jesus Christ was a created person, whom God the Father called into being; and Arians and Semi-Arians gave unto Him, in various forms, all the glory and exaltation that were compatible with His distinctness from and subordination to the Father. This heresy, subdued with much difficulty, retained sufficient power in the church to be very troublesome for some ages, and has never been eradicated.

The Nicene Council decided that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost were of the *same* essence; the Arians contending that they were of *like* essence. The dominant or orthodox party contended that while they were One, they were also Three. But three what? It is impossible that this question must not have greatly exercised the minds of thinking

men. Among the most noticeable things in church history is the indistinctness, the delay, not to say the reluctance, with which the church answered this question. I must be very brief in noticing this answer, and perhaps cannot do better than to refer for illustration to the three creeds, — the Apostles', the Nicean, and the Athanasian.

Of the first the origin is unknown; but it is certainly of extreme antiquity, and settled down into its present form in less than two centuries after our Lord's birth. It is not so much a creed of opinions or beliefs, as an assertion of facts; but of such facts as they who framed it supposed all Christians should and would admit. Very possibly it was soon after its general adoption used as a test-creed, as setting forth what it was on the one hand necessary, and on the other hand sufficient, for a Christian to believe in order to entitle him to that name. As to the point under consideration, it says nothing about our Lord except by stating the facts narrated in the Gospels, and nothing concerning His nature or His relation to the Father beyond calling Him "His only begotten Son."

Then came the Nicean creed; agreed upon at that council only after long, and earnest, and furious debate, and, perhaps, the coercive authority of the Emperor. In this creed, description and epithets are used without stint to mark with reprobation the

heresy of Arius. It calls our Lord, "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father." But they do not go further and say what the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are in respect to each other. And then came the Athanasian creed; formed, probably, a century or two after Athanasius, and called by his name, because it was intended and believed to express his views. However, whenever, or by whomsoever composed, it gradually worked its way into general acceptance; and for more than a thousand years, and until recently, has been the authoritative symbol or creed of Catholic, Greek, and Protestant, and indeed of Christendom, with the exception of those who have strayed wholly away from the old paths. This creed is as definite as words can make it, and labors after words to make it perfectly definite. The sum of the whole matter is, that there are three Persons and one God; "for there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost; but the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one; the glory equal, the majesty coeternal."

I do not pause to consider the Greek "hypostatis," or "prosopon," or the etymological and original meaning of Person. That which is certain about the matter is, that Christendom, as a general thing,

settled down into the worship of three persons who formed one God. They were understood to be distinct individualities, so distinct as to have different characteristics and functions, and enter into arrangements with each other founded upon these characteristics and the different work they did. This is made certain by the vicarious atonement, or the scheme of salvation which was founded upon and indissolubly connected with this distinctness of persons. For this scheme or system was, that the First person of the Trinity accepted the self-sacrifice of the Second person as atoning for the sin of the sinner, and satisfying the requirement of the First person's justice; whereby the Third person became able to do for the sinner the work of regeneration and salvation. It would seem difficult, not to say impossible, to hold this system in substance and reality, and not to look upon these three persons as separate from each other, as much as three men are; and any dimness or uncertainty about this distinct separation must make the belief of this scheme of salvation proportionally dim and indistinct; and if this distinct separation were wholly lost, then all belief in this scheme must be wholly lost from thought, whatever words might continue to be used. A few words concerning the history of this doctrine may illustrate our meaning.

We have a right to say of Augustine, Bishop of

Hippo, that he was a great and good man, if any evidence can authorize us to attach these words to any person. And yet, to him more than to any other, the Christian Church owes its system of election, predestination, and salvation by faith alone. Of course it is always said by those who hold this system, that its foundations are to be found in the epistles of Paul. There, undoubtedly, Augustine did find these foundations; but it was his great logical power which built upon them the fabric that has lasted to our own time.

His early life was, perhaps, dissolute. But the instruction of his admirable mother, Monica, who was a most devout Christian, at length bore fruit. While still a young man he determined to change his life. At first he sought help and guidance in philosophy; but he soon saw or felt its insufficiency, and, turning to religion, he became a Manichean. To that doctrine of two sovereigns of the world, one good and the other evil, he was impelled by the profound conviction of his own sinfulness. After a few years he renounced it, and became an orthodox Christian. Still the conviction of his sinful nature haunted him, and the business of his intellectual life was to account for this. He thought the accepted doctrines of the church, especially as expounded by St. Paul, enabled him to do so; for he understood from them that Adam by his disobedience,—by doing

his own will instead of the will of God, which is at once the root and the sum and substance of all evil, — fixed upon his own nature the stain of rebellion, and imparted that nature to his children, whereby they are irresistibly inclined to evil; that is, to the love of self rather than the love of God. By this taint all men became sinful, and all merit from the perfect justice of God the punishment of damnation. They could be saved only by the self-sacrifice of the only-begotten Son of God, who thereby atoned for their sins; and the benefit of this atonement fell on those who had been elected as its recipients, and predestined to salvation. At first, and for some years, he held only to conditional predestination; that is, to predestination founded upon foreknowledge. The Omniscient could not but foreknow who would accept the grace offered to all, and them He would predestinate to salvation. But in his later years he abandoned all condition, and maintained the doctrine of absolute predestination, with no reference to the individual man. In those days this doctrine was, and ever since has been, opposed by those who saw in it the great danger of telling men that conduct could have no influence upon destiny; and in Augustine's day this opposition was the more urgent, because his doctrine had impelled some to avowed Antinomianism (or the worthlessness of obedience to law), and to the misconduct which would flow there-

from. Nevertheless, his great influence established this as the doctrine of the church. In succeeding ages, this doctrine came sometimes into controversy, and sometimes faded out of notice. Later, in the centuries immediately preceding Luther, it yielded practically to a view of the efficacy of works, which was carried to an extreme.

Then came Luther. Partly from constitutional tendency, more from his needing it as a weapon against the papacy, he took up Augustine's whole system, dwelling especially upon salvation by faith alone. I have read a quotation from one of his sermons, in which he says that good works can have nothing to do in causing regeneration, because before regeneration our works cannot be good, and after regeneration they cannot cause what has been already effected. He and his disciples — the kind and gentle Melancthon especially — preached and pressed this doctrine unreservedly; and, as one of its almost inevitable consequences, Antinomianism, or disregard of the law, broke forth with fury, and did vast mischief.

It is, however, to Calvin more than to any or all others, that the prevalence of the doctrine of salvation by faith alone among Protestants is due. He rested this doctrine upon the atonement by vicarious punishment, and that upon the doctrine of three persons in one God. With his powerful logic he

bound together with such consistency and coherence these elements of his system, that it has resisted all assault until recently. Now, while it has caused some to be unbelievers in any religion, and has led more to construct a religion which did not require the divinity of Jesus Christ, it has exhibited its inherent weakness more clearly by its universal decay. There are still a few who from time to time preach or publish some assertion of old Orthodoxy in its hardest form, as if to show that it was not quite dead yet. Nor is it; for to many it is all the religion they have, and any obscurity or weakening of the system in their minds, or of its foundation (the tripersonality of the Godhead), is an obscurity and a weakening of their religion.

The strongest minds, — profoundly impressed with the necessity of upholding the doctrine of an atonement by vicarious suffering, on the one hand, and of maintaining the unity of God on the other, — have expended all their strength in the endeavor to reconcile a trinity of persons with a unity of person. But in vain, because reason is incapable of the thought. Some have said it is not a truth for reason, because we cannot understand it; but that it is a truth for faith, because we can believe it. But this is a mere misuse of the word "belief." If a scholar whom we trusted read to us some Arabic words of which we knew not the mean-

ing, and told us they expressed a truth, we might learn the sounds and repeat them as a formula, and insist that they were true. But this would be a belief of the man who told us, and in no sense a belief of the wholly unknown ideas which the words express. So, if our religious teachers assure us that God is one person, but is also three persons, we may say it is so; but we attach no meaning to the words, nor is there any meaning in our faith; for the human mind is wholly unable to attach a meaning to such words.

Those who hold this doctrine as an article of faith may be divided into three classes: First, those who hold it only in words, and do not think about it at all. Then, those who profess the doctrine, but forget the tripersonality, and believe in one God. Then, those who, clinging to the tripersonality, believe in three Gods. It would seem to be impossible to believe actually in three persons and one God, because this is unthinkable. The old maxim, "*Credo quia impossibile est,*" — "I believe because it is impossible," — was used to mark the distinction between a religious faith and a merely rational faith. Now none would avow it, and all would agree that it was ludicrously absurd. And yet it would express accurately the condition of that mind which really believed that there were three persons, each one of

whom was God, and that, nevertheless, there was but one God.

It is to this condition of the Christian mind, that the New-Church comes to give for evermore a definite object of religious Faith, of Worship, and of Love. This object is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; in whose person is a Trinity analogous to that in every man. For in every man there is Love or affection, which is the motive power of every act; Thought, which is produced from love or affection, and is the instrument by means of which the affection or desire acts; and Action, or operation, wrought by the love through the thought. And in these we have, by as close an analogy as can exist between the infinite and the finite, what is meant by Jehovah the Father, His only-begotten Son, and the Holy Spirit. When we address a man, and ask of him a favor, we do not address his affections alone, nor his thoughts alone, nor his action alone; but we address the whole man. Precisely so should we address in thought, in faith, in prayer, and in love, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is Jehovah in His divine humanity. He is the Holy Spirit in His divine providence. He is our Lord and our God. Will, understanding, and action are as distinct in God as they are in man, and are distinct in man because they are distinct in God; and they are

no more three persons in God than they are three persons in man.

Without recognizing the likeness between God and man, as has been repeatedly said, it will be impossible to have any idea whatever of God. From very early in the history of thought on this subject, — at least in the early Hindu and Greek religious philosophies, — there were those who urgently and eloquently maintained the doctrine of one God, the All-father, the Infinite, Absolute, and Impersonal; towards whom or which, in their view, all the many and diversified forms of popular religion pointed. Of late years this doctrine seems to be revived; for there are those who think they are giving clearness and accuracy to their religious ideas by going back, not to the early name, but to this early doctrine. That God should be a person they hold to be an absurdity, and almost a contradiction in terms. He must be infinite, and therefore without limitation or definition; and therefore without personality. But it should be obvious, for it is certain, and by some of the strongest thinkers who hold this view it is admitted, that of such a Being it is necessarily impossible to form any idea or conception. Such an idea of God may be held in words, but not in mind; it may be said, but it can not be thought; for if this infinitude makes personality impossible, it necessarily makes all idea or concep-

tion impossible. The whole effect upon the mind of such a view must be negative. It leads to the denial of every form of doctrine which implies personality, but it substitutes nothing in its place. With some it may lead to the deification of Nature, or to some form of Pantheism; but these, whatever words may be used, are but ways of denying that there is any God. For the human mind is such, that, to extinguish all idea of a God possessing the incidents of personality, is to exclude all idea of God. A religious sense, which is satisfied with such a God, must be satisfied with a God whom it can not love, nor worship, nor think of definitely. Far more might be said of the inexpressible mistake of attempting to believe in an impersonal God. But it would all end in this,—that an impersonal God is a word only, and not a thought.

It is to guard against this peril, and lift men out of this utter darkness, that in all ages Divine Providence has permitted them to find personal objects of worship in the many forms of heathenism; for even these might train the good among them into the possibility of receiving more and higher truth in their subsequent state of being. The Jews were taught that there was but one God, and that he was a spirit. But they always regarded Him as a personal Being of unlimited power, who had chosen their race as the object of His especial favor.

Our Lord came ; and He disclosed His divinity sufficiently to lead to faith in Him, and to love and worship of Him. And in all subsequent ages, through all the clouds which have gathered about His revelation of Himself, and all distortions of the truth, He has lifted towards Himself the thoughts and the hearts of all who have not chosen to grovel upon the earth.

He has come again. He has come in the spirit, and has given to mankind the revelation which lay within the former revelation as the soul within the body. He has come to satisfy, fully and for ever, the requirement of human nature for a Divine Man, who may be the object of love and worship without limit. He has come not merely to satisfy this requirement, but to show that it springs from the very nature of God Himself, and of man, and of the relation of man to God. We may know now, what has always been known by those who could profit by the knowledge, that it was impossible to form any idea of Him, excepting through the ideas of human nature which we derive from self-consciousness. But we may also know now, that in this way we can form an idea of Him, founded upon His true nature and the actual working of His Providence ; which idea, however imperfect and inadequate, may, as far as it goes, be just, and be capable of unending increase in its development and its truth. He has

come to teach us that as all things exist from Him, so all our life is from Him, and is His life given to us to be our own; that our humanity is the effect and the image of His humanity, our personality the effect and image of His personality; and that we are men because He is perfect man.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUSION.

IN this last chapter, I propose to touch upon some of those topics which have not yet been considered, but of which some notice seems necessary even to the sketch I am endeavoring to make.

OF MARRIAGE.

This topic, from the place it holds in the philosophy of the New-Church, might seem to merit a chapter to itself. Nothing more, however, will be attempted, than a brief statement of the peculiar views held concerning this subject.

In the faith of the New-Church, marriage is connected with the order of the whole universe, from the bottom to the summit. In all ages, a kind of duality, answering somewhat to that of the sexes, has been recognized as everywhere existing. Modern science has proved that this distinction of sexes, and the propagation of life by their conjunction, exists throughout the vegetable kingdom as much as in the animal kingdom. Elsewhere are traces of

the same principle, not so obvious or so certain, but which many writers have referred to, in many ways. All of this, whatever be its form or its manifestation, refers to the primary and essential duality between the Divine love and the Divine wisdom. This duality is perfect, and their union into oneness is perfect. They are, to translate Swedenborg's phrase, "distinctly one;" that is, distinct and yet one. In mankind, these two divine elements come down into the human will and the human understanding, which are formed for their reception. Below the spirit of man, these divine elements come forth into the human form, and cause the distinction of the sexes. Farther down and outside of man, they cause a distinction of the sexes in the animal and vegetable kingdom. Still farther down, in the world of dead matter, they cause the innumerable correspondences which make this dead world representative, in this respect, of the world of life.

In man, this correspondence is necessarily higher than in the world outside of him, for the whole of that world is lower than he is. Of the two sexes, the correspondence changes somewhat with the change in the state of the individuals. Generally, however, the intellectual prevails in man, and the affectional in woman.

In God these two elements are perfectly united,—are one. It has been already said that it is the con-

stant effort of Providence to make the will and the understanding in man united into oneness; for then, what the understanding sees as true the will loves as good, and there is the joy of peace in the whole man. The chief instrument to this end, and the most prominent example of the influence of this effort, is a marriage between two who may become one, by the union of the will and the understanding. The husband representing the understanding, and the wife representing the will, they two become one, when they are perfectly adapted to each other, and bound together by mutual love; they are a one formed of two whom God has joined together. Then the husband draws for every thought warmth and vitality from the wife, and every affection of her heart draws truth, enlightenment, and guidance from the wisdom of the husband.

The distinction between the sexes is not bodily only; it is primarily spiritual, and exists in the body only by derivation from the spirit. It is complete in the body; for no smallest part in a masculine body is precisely the same with the answering part in the feminine body. The distinction is also perfect in the spirit. Nothing in the soul, or in the thought, or affection, or motive, or action, of the one is precisely the same with any thing in the other. Therefore this distinction survives the death of the body. It is as perfect in the spiritual world as it

was in the natural world. The two who have made each other happy, and who have helped each other while here to advance hand in hand along the way of life, were, while bound by the ties of a natural marriage, united in a spiritual marriage even in this world; and this marriage, so far from being weakened by the death of the body, rises as they rise, and is for ever the means of their ascent, and grows in strength and in happiness with every step of their ascent.

And they, too, who have not known on earth the happiness of such a marriage, because the wisdom of their Father saw that it was not well for them to find it here, if they choose good rather than evil, and by that choice become angels, will be sure to find it in heaven, and to find in it a large part of all that heaven can give them.

Hence, in the view of the New-Church, marriage stands invested, not with an importance merely, but with a sanctity, that it can not know elsewhere. The best influences of heaven have formed it, and bless it; and through it descend to earth and find a home in human hearts.

Hence, too, all that is hostile to, or inconsistent with, the holiness and purity of marriage, — all unchastity, infidelity, impurity, and lust, in thought, or word, or act, — are seen in the new light now dawning, to come direct from hell, and to be the surest

means of dragging down their victims to the dark abodes from which they spring.

Only when the true nature of the marriage relation and its origin in the Divine nature itself are understood, can we form a just conception of the truth, that whatever is hostile to this relation pollutes the source of all good, and threatens the destruction of all happiness. The Scriptures bear testimony to this truth in the very peculiar phraseology often recurring in the prophetic writings, which is quite unintelligible without the aid of this truth. For in the most terrible denunciations of the prophets, the charge of adultery and fornication is constantly brought upon churches and races, and so applied that a literal understanding of it is impossible; as in Jeremiah iii., 8, 9, it is said, that "backsliding Israel" and "her treacherous sister Judah" "committed adultery with stocks and stones." And in Isaiah xxiii., 18, it is said that, "Tyre shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth." In all the many texts of this kind, these sins are used to express the direst perversion and corruption of all that is good, and the falsification of all that is true; and thus the consummation of all evil.

OF THOUGHT.

What is Thought? And here, as so often elsewhere, I must go back to the central truth, that all our life is derived from God,—is His life given to us to be our own. His being consists of that which when received by our will — which is formed for its reception — constitutes love and affection of every kind; and of that which when received by our understanding — which is formed for its reception — constitutes thought, or rather the capacity of thought; for thought exists only when the understanding becomes active. The activity of the understanding is thought. For our understanding is formed first, to receive life from the Divine wisdom; and then, by its own action, to manifest this life in all the forms and varieties of thought. Our thoughts are not the thoughts of God in us; for they are our own thoughts, caused by the action of our own minds, by virtue of the life which is given to us to be our own.

Animals think; but men have far higher and wider capacities of thought. There have been endless discussions of the question, What constitutes the difference between human thought and animal thought? Some, who have looked only or mainly at the enormous difference between them, have come to the conclusion that animals are little or

nothing more than self-acting machines, without thought or even sensation. Others, who have looked only or mainly at the great similitude between animal and human thought, have concluded that they are much the same in kind, differing only in degree.

Our first answer to the question, — What constitutes the difference between men and animals? — is this. We have heretofore spoken of the internal man and the external man, or of man's internal nature and his external nature. Animals have no internal nature. The human external is like the animal external in kind, though larger and fuller in measure. But a man is essentially more than an animal, because he has also an internal nature. Animals are not immortal. Their life begins and ends on earth; and their whole nature is adapted to life on earth. Man is immortal, and lives here to prepare for a life which begins when this life ends. Besides an external, which with him as with animals is adapted to life on earth, he has also an internal; whence he has the power while living here, to take thought for an eternal morrow, and to prepare for living hereafter. A man who makes no use of his internal, but suffers it to grow torpid and wholly inactive, leads a life which is only an animal life, however far above it he may seem to be, from the larger capacities of his external nature.

Intellectually considered, the difference between

men and animals is this: Animals have not, and men have, the power of *thinking about their thoughts*; and all the differences between them are derivable from this difference; and this again is derived from the primary difference, that animals have only an external nature, while men have both an external and an internal. Men and animals think, first, in their external minds. Animals stop there because they have no other mind. But men have another and a higher mind, and from that look down upon, recognize, and think about, the thoughts in that lower mind.

Thought is certainly possible without words; for the youngest infants think, and animals think: but neither of them can speak. At first, all thought is caused by sensation. The thoughts of an infant, thus caused, are very few. Soon, however, he begins to think about his thoughts; or, in other words, his thoughts become the subjects of thought. Then it is possible to use words, and the child slowly learns to speak. An animal never speaks. A dog can see that a cherry is red, and that blood or raw flesh are red, as well as man can, and can recognize the things as well as man can; but he can not think of the thought, and therefore he can not think of *redness*, aside from any one or more red things; and he has no word which would apply to all red things, because he has no such thought. To

use the terms of logic, he can think in the concrete but not in the abstract; and words which are abstract, or which represent abstract thoughts, form so large and so important a portion of language, that without them there could be no language. Such words are not derived directly from sensation, but from thought about the thoughts which sensation excites. Men, as we have said, can think from sensation, and can then rise to a higher plane of thought and look down upon the thoughts derived directly from sensation. Animals have not this higher plane of thought. Because animals have no such thoughts they have no words. They make sounds which are often very significant, and communicate information to their fellows or to men. These sounds may be said to be their words, and to constitute their language. And it is much what our language would be if it lost all its abstract words, and contained none but those expressive of some one specific object. Human language can signify specific objects, but it is only by the use of words which limit and specialize these objects. *Generic* words are thus made *specific* words. I can think and speak of *pens*; but if I would speak of a pen on my table, or the pen in my hand, I must use apposite words, or perhaps use apposite gestures, — as when I say *this* pen, and show it, or point to it.

Animals can have no abstract words, because they have no abstract thoughts; and they have no abstract thoughts, because they do not need them; and they do not need them, because they are not immortal. Men owe to language (which they could not have without abstract thought) civilization, with all that it implies or includes, and all science, with the immense addition which it makes to human enjoyment. These things belong to this life; and it may be said that men would lose a vast deal, even were this life all, if they were without language. But it should be remembered that this life, with all that is in it, is intended to promote the preparation of mankind for another life, by the development and elevation of both the intellect and the affections. It is left to human freedom to determine whether and in what degree this effect shall be produced; but such is the purpose of every thing which is comprehended within or produced by civilization. And it is for this purpose that civilization, and language as the means of civilization, are given.

But language can do far more to effect this purpose of preparation for eternity. It is the instrument of thought; and thought can not only use it to express itself, but, by means of language, can advance gradually and slowly to an elevation it could not otherwise have reached: and this ascending pathway will know no end. A profound thought

which is clothed in words gains definiteness and ultimatum. It stands distinctly before the mind, and becomes the step from which a higher ascent can be made. And words may rise as thoughts rise; and, in that future life where much that fetters them here will pass away, both words and thoughts will reach an elevation far transcending our present capacity of conception.

In this upward progress of thought, three stages may be recognized, answering to the three degrees which play so important a part in the system of Swedenborg. To these three stages we give the names of knowledge, intelligence, and wisdom. We must begin with knowing; for, if we know nothing, there is nothing for us to understand. We may, however, know much, very much, and understand little or nothing of what we know. We take an entirely distinct step forward when we begin to know, not only the thing, but its place in Nature or in thought, its relations with those other things which touch it upon all sides, the end for which it is, the cause which produces it, and the effects which it produces. Then we have ascended from knowledge to intelligence. We may know very much, and understand much about what we know, and yet have little or no wisdom. For here also we take another distinct step forward, when we inquire into and ascertain the relation of a thing or a truth

to life and character, and apply it in accordance with what we learn. It is for the sake of wisdom that we possess the faculties of knowing, and of understanding what we know; and only in the measure in which we acquire wisdom are these faculties put to their proper use.

Either knowledge, intelligence, or wisdom may exist in any degree, small or great. Where the knowledge is large there may be little of intelligence or wisdom; where it is small there may still be much of these. And of these two either may be small while the other is large, or the converse. We often meet knowing men of active intellects, who are far from wise, and men of little knowledge or active thought, who are wise with what they know. Always one law holds good. Knowledge and intelligence are for the sake of wisdom; if they do not end in this, they may as well not be, and will cease to be at death. Only when, only as far as, knowledge and intelligence have ripened into wisdom, and their fruits are rooted in the life and character, and so belong to the ownhood of the man, do they rise with him from the grave of the dead body, and abide with him for evermore. These fruits may be small; but, if they belong to the life, they will be as living seeds, possessing the power of indefinite multiplication and unending duration in that increase.

OF INSTINCT.

The instinct of animals is another topic of frequent discussion. By some means animals know, from the beginning of life, what they must do to preserve life and make it comfortable, and how they must do it. Neither instruction nor imitation have much to do with it, if any thing. Birds might perhaps profit by the example of their parents, and there are some indications of animals teaching their young. But, after the utmost is made of instances of this kind, it is still certain that instinct teaches to all animals much, and to some animals all that they know, without any other instruction; as in the case of those insects which never knew their parents, and cannot know their children. There is something of instinct also with human beings, as when new-born babes take their mother's milk at once, as perfectly the first time as ever. What then is instinct?

To answer this question, we must again go back to the primal truth, that all life is God's life, imparted to those who live by receiving it. But to this we must now add another truth, or law. It is, that, while life is one, it is determined in its action, manifestation, aspect, and effect, by the form of the recipient. My readers must remember what I have repeatedly said, that I do not mean by form, shape, but the inmost nature of the thing; that which

gives to the *form* of a thing, according to Bacon, almost the same meaning as the *law* of the thing: for its form is the law which determines what it is. The doctrine above stated is not a new one. It is indeed much the same with the old maxim, "Quicquid recipitur, recipitur ad modum recipientis," — "whatever is received, is received after the manner of the receiver," — provided we add to the maxim that the "*modus*," or manner, is determined by the form, or inmost nature, of the receiver; and that this form is itself determined by and adjusted to the use or function of the receiver in the universe.

Every thing has its form, and could not exist without it. It is created in this form, through parents if it be an organized and living thing, to the end that it may so live by the life it receives as to carry into effect the end for which it exists. Therefore it has by creation the form by means of which it will manifest the life it receives in the way which that end requires.

The variety in these forms, and in the way in which they accomplish the ends for which they are, is simply infinite. No two leaves in a forest, no two grains of sand upon a seashore, are absolutely alike. But all things are arranged in classes, which man can often discern, in each of which all the individuals resemble each other, while no two are precisely alike. These classes gradually rise, from

beings so small that they are only indicated but not shown by our best instruments, to the larger beings which are yet so small that only these instruments can discern them; and from these up through all the range of animal life, and at last to man himself, who, while also an animal, is not merely the highest of animals, but above all animals. Through this infinite variety, the one law prevails which makes each one, while it lives by receiving the same Divine life which gives life to all, at the same time itself, and by its form determined in its action and function.

The bud on every tree wraps the living germ that is to break forth next spring in the tenderest, softest leaflets, imbricated around that central germ with a skill human art cannot imitate, and covers the whole with a thick and leathery coat, cemented together so as to resist the winter storm and cold, and protect the tender life within while it needs protection. An insect lays its eggs in an exact order upon the twigs of the tree that its offspring when hatched can eat, and covers them too with a protective and sufficient cement. The bird that builds in the tree builds its nest carefully in the appropriate season, lays its eggs, sedulously covers and warms them with her own heat during the appointed period, and, when her young break forth, rejoices to find food for them and to protect them

to the utmost of her power, even, if need be, at the peril of her own life. The human mother delights in caring for her new-born, and, as it lies in its cradle, covers it when too much cold threatens, with one and another blanket, as the tree protects its germ by the leaflets it folded around it. So much for the affections; and the same law holds good as to the intellect. For thousands of years, the honey-bee has constructed its marvellous cells, all upon the same model. A few generations ago, a human mind was able to discover its mathematical accuracy, and to demonstrate that it solved practically a most difficult problem,—how to construct cells which should afford the utmost storage room and have the utmost strength which were possible, by the use of a certain quantity of building material.

And now, What is instinct? It is action by a recipient of life, promotive of the ends for which that recipient exists, but without its conscious, intelligent, and voluntary coöperation. When the tree so shapes the bud as to protect the germ at its centre, it is wholly unconscious of what it is doing. The insect lays, arranges, and seals up its eggs on the tree, without the slightest thought of why it does this, but probably finds pleasure in what it does; for its desire and determination to do it are intense and regardless of obstacles. The bird has perhaps something more of consciousness as to the

why and the wherefore of its acts; and certainly, when its young become the objects of its care, finds great enjoyment in that care. The human mother knows what she does, and why she does it, and is happy in doing it; and sometimes makes great mistakes, and sometimes fails utterly in that which, because she possesses rational power, has become her duty, but is subjected to that rational power.

Here is the dividing line. Animals are so constituted that the very form of their being causes the life received to manifest itself in all the knowledges and all the acts which are necessary for them. To man more is given, for he has the power of voluntarily carrying into effect the purposes for which he lives; and, that he may exercise this power, they cannot be and will not be carried into effect without his coöperation. The bee knew at the beginning how to make his cell perfectly, or rather did make his cell perfectly, by the influence of the mind within him of which he had no consciousness, and over which he had no control. But innumerable ages rolled along before man, from the ability to count his fingers, — and this he had to learn, — rose up through the series of gradually-acquired knowledges, into the ability to comprehend the mathematical character of the cell.

The animal is not wholly without reason, and the man not wholly without instinct. And yet it is

certain that reason characterizes man, and instinct animals. The mother who tenderly cares for her child may do this only from instinct, and only as instinct prompts; and so far she is only an animal. But she may rise far higher than this; for she may look upon her child as an immortal being, given to her by God, entrusted to her care, and bringing with it a boundless responsibility so to deal with it as to promote its eternal welfare. And she may, through all the years that she is spared to it, use all her rational faculties to discern and pursue the path that leads to this end. Nothing of all this can the animal mother even think of. The human mother can if she will, and can neglect this duty if she will; but only so far as she does it, is she a woman, a human mother. The universal law which is founded upon the inmost nature of man, and man alone, and governs his whole being and destiny, comes in here as everywhere. For man only is capable of a voluntary coöperation with his Father; he only is capable of a voluntary reception of the gifts which his Father is ever seeking to bestow; and he only is capable of a voluntary refusal of this coöperation or this reception. But only by them can man become so far His child as to know the full blessedness of that relation.

THE SLOW GROWTH OF THE NEW-CHURCH.

It is more than a century since the foundation of this church was laid, by the publication of the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. For more than half of that time, individuals and societies have been active in translating them, and in publishing them widely. There have been many preachers of these doctrines, and not a few writers of books and periodicals. The sale of Swedenborg's writings, and of books intended to present the doctrines of the church, has been constant and large. How happens it, under these circumstances, that the growth of this church has been and is so slow, if its doctrines are all that we who hold them suppose them to be?

There are many answers to this question. One among them is, that its growth has been greater than is apparent. It is not a sect. Its faith does not consist of a few specific tenets, easily stated and easily received. It is a new way of thinking about God and man, this life and another, and every topic connected with these. And this new way of thinking has made and is making what may well be called great progress. It may be discerned everywhere, in the science, literature, philosophy, and theology of the times; not prevalent in any of them, but existing, and cognizable by all who are able to

appreciate these new truths with their bearings and results. If we hold that the spiritual world is the world of causes, and this world the world of effects, then we must hold that the New-Church will be an effect of influences which come, as the New Jerusalem is said by John to come, "from God out of heaven."

These influences are constantly at work to promote the establishment of this New-Church upon earth. Not suddenly, not violently, for the Lord is infinitely patient; but slowly, step by step, and only in such wise as is compatible with that spiritual freedom of mankind which is never violated.

Let it not be supposed that by the New-Church is meant the organized societies calling themselves by that name. In one sense, that is their name. Swedenborg says there are three essentials of this Church: a belief in the Divinity of the Lord, and in the sanctity of the Scriptures, and a life of charity, which is a life governed by a love of the neighbor. Where these are, there is the Church. Whoever holds these essentials in faith and life is a member of the New-Church, whatever may be his theological name or place. Only in the degree in which he so holds these essentials is any one a member of that church. Those who, holding or desiring to hold these essentials in faith and life, unite and organize that they may be assisted and may assist each other in so

holding them, constitute the visible or professed New-Church. But very false would they be to its doctrines, if they supposed themselves to be exclusively members of that Church, or if they founded their membership upon their profession or external organization. For there is no other true foundation for this membership than every man's own internal reception of the essentials of the church, and his leading the life which its truths require.

It would demand a volume to indicate all those effects the new influences now constructing new heavens and a new earth have already produced, that we who can see but a very small part of the whole are able to discern. But we may mention as one of these effects, that Calvinism — old, hard, uncompromising — has almost disappeared. Where should we read in any new book, where should we hear in any sermon, of the damnation of infants, absolute election and predestination; or an atonement which presented God as vindictive and merciless, condemning a large part of His children, before their birth, to eternal misery, and hating with infinite and eternal wrath, not only sin but sinners, whom He had foreordained to be sinners? The Orthodox community has generally gone so far from such doctrines, that many may deny that they ever were preached, and charge me with error and injustice. I would advise persons who do so, to read the

“spider sermon,” so called, of Jonathan Edwards, lately republished. In all ages there have been those who turned their minds away from such pictures, and, even while assenting in words, greatly modified these views in their thoughts and feelings. But that such views were widely preached, and, indeed, passionately urged, is a matter of history.

One other instance of the diffused and indirect influence of the New-Church is the change which has taken place in the thought and feeling concerning death. Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson, in an essay on Immortality, contained in a volume lately published,—in which he gives in his own inimitable manner what we may regard as his latest views on many interesting subjects,—says: “Swedenborg had a vast genius, and announced many things true and admirable, though always clothed in somewhat sad and Stygian colors. These truths, passing out of his system into general circulation, are now met with every day, qualifying the views and creeds of all churches, and of men of no church. And I think we are all aware of a revolution in opinion. Sixty years ago, the books read, the sermons and prayers heard, the habits of thought of religious persons,—were all directed on death. All were under the shadow of Calvinism, and of the Roman Catholic purgatory; and death was dreadful. The emphasis of all the good books given to young

people was on death. We were all taught that we were born to die; and over that, all the terrors that theology could gather from savage nations were added to increase the gloom. A great change has occurred: death is seen as a natural event, and is met with firmness." Mr. Emerson is a good judge of this, and he is an impartial judge; for he is very far indeed from accepting the system of Swedenborg. The fact is undoubtedly as he states it. The indirect influence of the New-Church has produced just that effect; but it is as yet most imperfect and incomplete. What will it be, and what changes in thought and feeling will it cause, when the darkness and dread which have in all ages rested upon the grave, pass away? —when the inexpressible folly of bewailing the dead, with the feeling that they have ceased to live, or "are sleeping in the grave," is effectually exposed, not by faith only, but by a close and exact reason, which, while receiving warmth from faith, gives to it light? —when the shuddering horror which now shrouds the dead body, gives way to the certainty that death is but *a step forward in life*?

It may be said, and indeed often is said, that all this fading out or modification of ancient error is due to "the spirit of the age." This is true, — exactly true; for the spirit of the age is the spirit of the New-Church, doing its work wherever it can.

If it can do but a little here, it does that little; if it can do more there, it does more: everywhere doing all it can, always in subordination to the principle that no more can be done for man than he is willing to accept.

Another answer to the question — Whence the slow growth of the church? — may be this: Christians may now be divided into those who care for religion, and those who do not. They who do care for religion constantly nourish their religious faith, value it, and make some effort to live in accordance with it. They are therefore confirmed in that faith, and, if not wholly satisfied with it, they are at least convinced that there is no better, and that it would be a great mistake, if not a sin, to wander away from it. The stronger their faith; and the more they value it, the greater would be their dislike of a heresy which claimed, as they must think, to supersede it, and the more unwilling they must be even to inquire into it. While they who feel no interest in religion, and whose observance of it is merely formal, — a thing of habit, but not of meaning, — would feel no interest whatever in this new form of religion. It is nothing to them, and threatens only to disturb the routine of their thought and life. If they are led by mere curiosity to look into it at all, it is unintelligible to them, or it presents difficulties they do not care enough about the matter

to encounter; and they pass it by with indifference or contempt.

This would be a sufficient answer, if the division above made were exhaustive; that is, if there were none in the Christian Church but those who were wedded to the faith that they held and satisfied with it, and those who held no faith and had no desire to hold any. But there is a third class; perhaps not inconsiderable now, and continually increasing. This class consists of those who have much religious sentiment, and some, perhaps much, desire to learn religious truth that they may have the support and comfort of distinct and firm religious belief; but who have no such belief and indeed no faith, because the forms or systems of faith in which they have been educated or which are within their reach are entirely unsatisfactory, and seem to them irrational or unsupported by competent evidence. The question then takes this form: Why do not these persons come to the New-Church and find there all they want? The answer I would now make to this question rests upon a principle which only of late has been clearly seen and appreciated. The best recent writers upon the philosophy of history have solved some of the most difficult problems which it presents, by the recognition of the law, that the peculiar and distinctive characteristics of an age cannot fail to exert an almost irre-

sistible influence upon all its phenomena and all the individuals then living and acting.

One of the statements of Swedenborg is to the effect, that every substance puts forth from itself what may be called a sphere of itself, which contains or consists of its essential qualities. By this sphere, every thing exerts an influence upon its surroundings. In living organisms it is more active than in dead matter; in the animal world more active than in the vegetable world; and in men more active than in animals, for the sphere of men includes all their character. What is sometimes called — for want of a better word — the magnetic power of certain persons, by which, as orators, preachers, statesmen, generals, or in society, they exert an influence upon other men that seems, in some cases at least, inexplicable, may be accounted for by the spheres which flow from them. This power is sometimes said to be the power which a strong will exerts over a weaker. It is certainly stronger in him whose will is stronger, and is more energetic when the man himself is strongly excited and his will intensified.

The sphere of an age is the combined sphere of all who compose that age. Its power is very great, and can hardly be withstood by persons of ordinary power of resistance; and still less by those in whom this power is feeble, or who make no effort.

What then is the prevailing sphere of this age? Let us compare it with that of other ages.

So far as the records of human thought instruct us, we must believe that there never has been a period in which *naturalism* prevailed to the same extent as in the present. By this word, I mean a looking to and thinking about and caring for and recognition of things of this world rather than of the other; nature rather than spirit; secular interests of all kinds rather than those of religion. We may go back to ages so remote that we know little of them, but their monuments remain and tell us what a vast proportion of the labor of different races was expended in the service of religion; and we may infer what a hold it had upon the thought and care of rulers and peoples. Coming down through the ages, we shall find evidence of a similar condition of human interest. In the centuries of Christianity we find the strongest men — and very strong were some of them, especially in what we call “the dark ages” — devoting their most earnest thought to religion. The magnificent cathedrals of the middle ages tell the same story. We say nothing as to the value or worthlessness of the speculations about which so much profound thought was employed, or of the truth or falsity of the religions which were so highly valued; but only that, in all those days a strong and general interest was felt in

the religious questions of the time, and a very large proportion of the best and most strenuous intellectual effort was given to them.

Coming to our own age, what do we see? Let the railroad, the steam-engine, the telegraph, answer. We see a more earnest and successful devotion of human effort to science and arts in their application to this life than was ever before known. It may safely be said, that within the last hundred years there have been more inventions promotive of human activity and effort in the direction of the enjoyments of this life, and a greater utilization of all the forces of Nature to that end, than all the previous centuries taken together have contributed. Natural science has flourished and is flourishing as it never did, drawing into its service the best intellects; and their investigations and discoveries are presented in popular form in leading periodicals as the most acceptable and interesting reading they can offer to the public. In a word, never was there known a period approaching this in the earnest devotion of thought to every thing which is of the earth, earthly, and in the decay and feebleness of interest in that which concerns the spirit of man and his eternal life. Of course all the forms of religion remain, although so large a portion of the people attend to them not at all, or only with indifference. Of course there are still those who professionally, or from their personal

taste, write and publish on religious topics. But looking at the matter as a whole, who that has any real belief in another and an eternal world, and therefore regards this life as only introductory and preparatory, can fail to see that the set and tendency of human thought and care in these days is strongly and decidedly away from whatever belongs to man as an immortal, and towards this world and all that belongs to it; or away from spiritualism and towards naturalism?

I have used a word which suggests to me one answer that may be made. Is not the Spiritualism (so called, but I like better to call it spiritism) now so popular, a proof that I am wrong as to the prevalence and power of naturalism? On the contrary, I find in it cogent evidence that I am right. Of this spiritism, whatever else may be said of it, this much I think is certain (and my opinion is grounded upon much study of its phenomena, and much acquaintance with its literature. I do not speak of persons. Undoubtedly the many believers in spiritism are of all kinds; and some of them are good, and perhaps find aliment for their goodness in what they believe. But from what I have seen and heard and read, I write of the system and its fundamental doctrines; for these it seems to have),—spiritism does nothing more than extend this life beyond the grave. If its theories, or its dreams, are realized,

the other life is but a continuation of this. So far is it from opposing naturalism, that it gives to the merest, lowest, and grossest naturalism an element of perpetuity; and this is its highest idea of immortality. So far from spiritism being an opponent of naturalism, I believe that its popularity and rapid spread spring from its naturalism, and from its supplying food for the hunger of mankind for some knowledge of what is to follow death, without making any demand for an elevation of either the will or the understanding above the common thoughts, cares, or interests of this world. I believe spiritism to be the consummation of naturalism. It brings the thought of heaven itself down to earth, — not to lift the earthly up, but to be itself submerged in the very dregs of earthliness.

Naturalism at this day dominates the thought of Christendom as it never did before. The metaphysical philosophy of the day is characterized by a prevailing — not a universal — tendency to limit its inquiry into the nature and functions of mind to this life, not seldom with an express or distinctly implied denial of any other.

So, as to the philosophy of history, whether general or confined to some special subject, as that of civilization. Writers who are most successful do not seem to have a thought of Providential action or purpose. Buckle went farther; his naturalism

was aggressive. He knew that something other than naturalism had vast power in other ages, and has some power in this; and the main purpose of his book was to extinguish its embers. These writers consider and analyze the course of events with utter ignorance or positive denial of Providential action or purpose. If it be true that there is a God, and that He is the Supreme Governor of the world, what sort of work must such writers make in their explanation of events and consequences? Just such work as they would make if they undertook to explain the mechanism and action of a clock, in utter ignorance or denial that there was any weight or pendulum. And yet their labor may not be wholly lost. They may supply to those who believe that there is a weight and pendulum, or a motive force and a governing wisdom, the means of tracing their influence through the intricate machinery, and of discerning more distinctly the purpose of the whole, and the way in which this purpose is accomplished.

We repeat, that naturalism at this day dominates the thought of Christendom as it never did before. And yet it may be that in this way and for this reason this age may be eminently preparatory for the new era of the New-Church. It is a fundamental principle of the new truths which will prevail in this new era, that Nature and spirit, when viewed aright, are not distinct from each other

in the way in which they have been thought to be. They are distinct — perfectly distinct — from each other; but Nature is the effect, the clothing, and the mirror of spirit: spirit is the cause, the inmost essence, and the soul of Nature. In the present generation, the most active and energetic thought is devoted to an investigation of Nature and of all its laws, forces, and phenomena. It has made a wonderful progress in this direction; and never did it seem to be advancing more rapidly than at this moment. But in all this, natural science is but laying up a vast store of materials which spiritual science is hereafter to make use of.

It is now a very common question, What is the use of all this knowledge, and what is the value of the truth which is sought with so much labor? One answer is, that truth, merely as truth and for its own sake, is a noble object of human pursuit; and much eloquence has been expended in proving this. Another answer is, that truths of the most abstract kind are found serviceable to the practical good of mankind. Mathematics, so profound that few men on earth are equal to its demands, is now applied to all natural science, and especially to astronomy; and astronomy directly assists the whole navigation of the civilized world. Chemistry, in some hands, is penetrating into all the physical secrets of Nature, and by other hands its discov-

eries as soon as made are utilized for practical art. And so it is with all the branches of natural science.

But a far better answer remains to be made to the question, What is the worth of natural science? The New-Church will bring back to the knowledge of mankind what, if it has known, it has forgotten, — that this life and this world are but preparatory for another, and that their value in this respect is as much more than their value in themselves, as eternity is more than time. Then, when the light of spiritual science is cast upon natural science, it will be seen that what is true of the whole of Nature is true of all the science which teaches us about Nature. Building upon the relation of Nature to spirit as that of an effect to its cause, and upon the correspondence between all things of Nature and the things of spirit, it will begin a work which will last through the ages: the work of showing that all natural science is but the clothing, the outer form, the mirror of spiritual science. Then it will be found that the age which busied itself successfully in gathering the stores of natural science was gathering a treasury of knowledge for spiritual science to lift up far above Nature. Then will it be seen that this naturalistic age was doing a work which was not only useful but indispensable for the work of that coming age.

And even the prevailing worldliness of this age

may possibly become instrumental for the growth of its opposite, — charity. Swedenborg is continually speaking about charity. It holds with him the same high place which Paul gives it when he says, “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and understand all mysteries, and have all faith, and bestow all my goods on the poor, and give my body to be burned, — all profiteth me *nothing*, if I have not charity.” But what is charity? Swedenborg gives this definition: “Charity itself is to act justly and faithfully in the office, business, and work in which one is, and with whomsoever he has any intercourse.” He does not object to or undervalue that which in the present opinion of the world is alone thought to be charity, — the caring for the poor (a mistake which Paul’s express declaration might have prevented); for this, he says, should always be done, but with prudence. Whatever is done outside of one’s regular employment may be a beneficent act; but it does not deserve the higher name of charity, for that belongs to the full and faithful discharge of all the duties of our office, place, function, or employment. And, whenever this charity prevails, there will be little need of that almsgiving which is now called charity. Swedenborg says of a true charity, “And so the common good is provided for as well as that of each individual.” And how universally would the good

of each individual be provided for, if all men performed all the duties of their employment justly and faithfully! Charity may be described as love in action. And a true charity is the love of the neighbor, and of all as our neighbors; recognizing the place and mode of work which belongs to us as that assigned to us by our Lord's perfect wisdom, because it is the best way in which we can exercise and manifest our love. And it is not the least among the novelties of Swedenborg's system, that he puts what is now called charity in its proper place, lifting up the word to its just meaning, and the thing itself to its high position. What will the earth be when the unremitted industry and active energy in all the uses of life which characterize this age are unabated, but the fever of greed is quelled, and selfishness is no longer dominant, order is unbroken, and usefulness universal, and the happiness of usefulness fills the human heart with the happiness it was made to enjoy? -

I have asked what earth would be then. There is but one answer, — it would be heaven. For, by the influence of such truth and the infusion of such life, earth would be lifted up to heaven.

Countless ages of ages have rolled away since this earth was made ready to be the home of human life. Gradually and very slowly mankind have reached their present condition. It may be that as many

ages must come forth from the womb of the future and join the long procession of the past, before such a hope can be, even in a moderate degree, fulfilled. But it is certain that for that happiness man was made; and to it, led by his Father's hand, he will approach while earth exists. How far away such a result may be; how slowly and with what alternations we may approach it; how long it will be before the fetters of naturalism and worldliness will be broken, or at least loosened, so far as to permit some decided relaxation of their influence, — we know not. What we do know is, that, while their influence remains dominant as it is now, the reception of this latest and consummating revelation must be slow, narrow, imperfect, and fragmentary; because New-Church doctrine and influence, and naturalism and worldliness, are exact antagonists. The New-Church strikes a deadly blow at naturalism, and must needs be resisted by all the influences of naturalism. Where one is strong, the other must be weak. Where one holds possession, the other cannot enter. None who live in this age can wholly escape the influence of the age; and that influence tends powerfully to close the mind against spiritual truth, and to bar the heart against the entrance of spiritual life.

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